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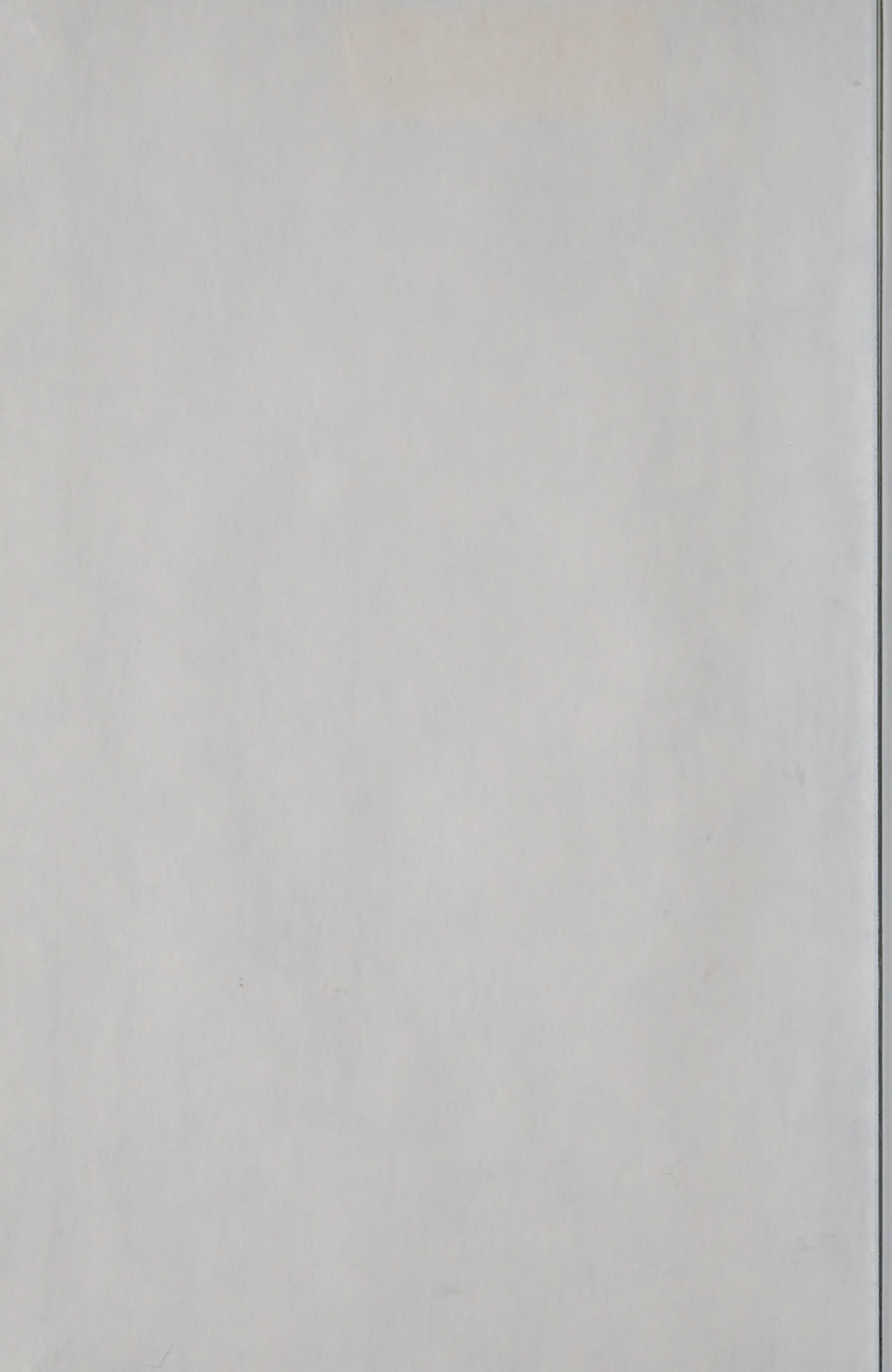
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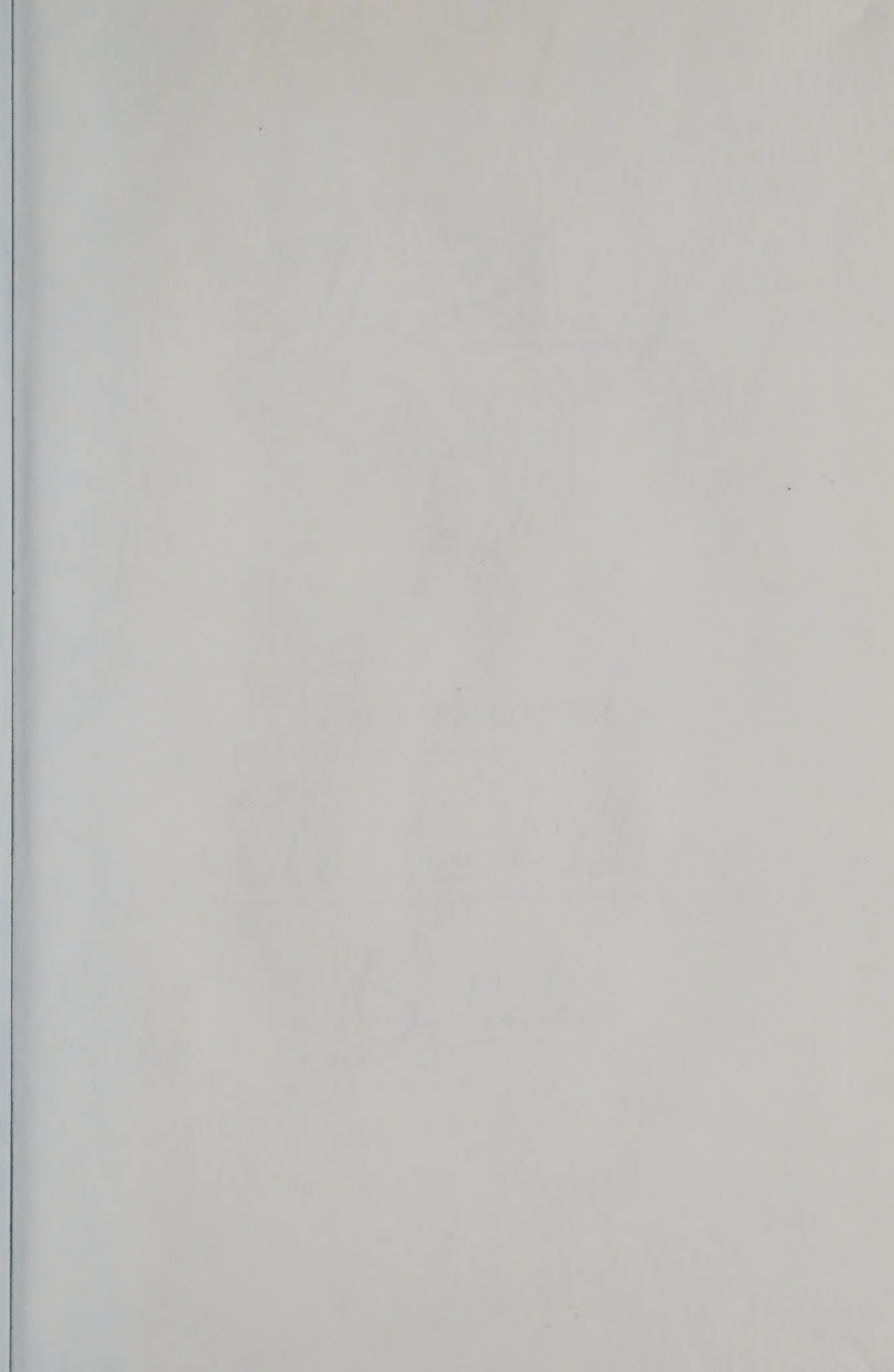
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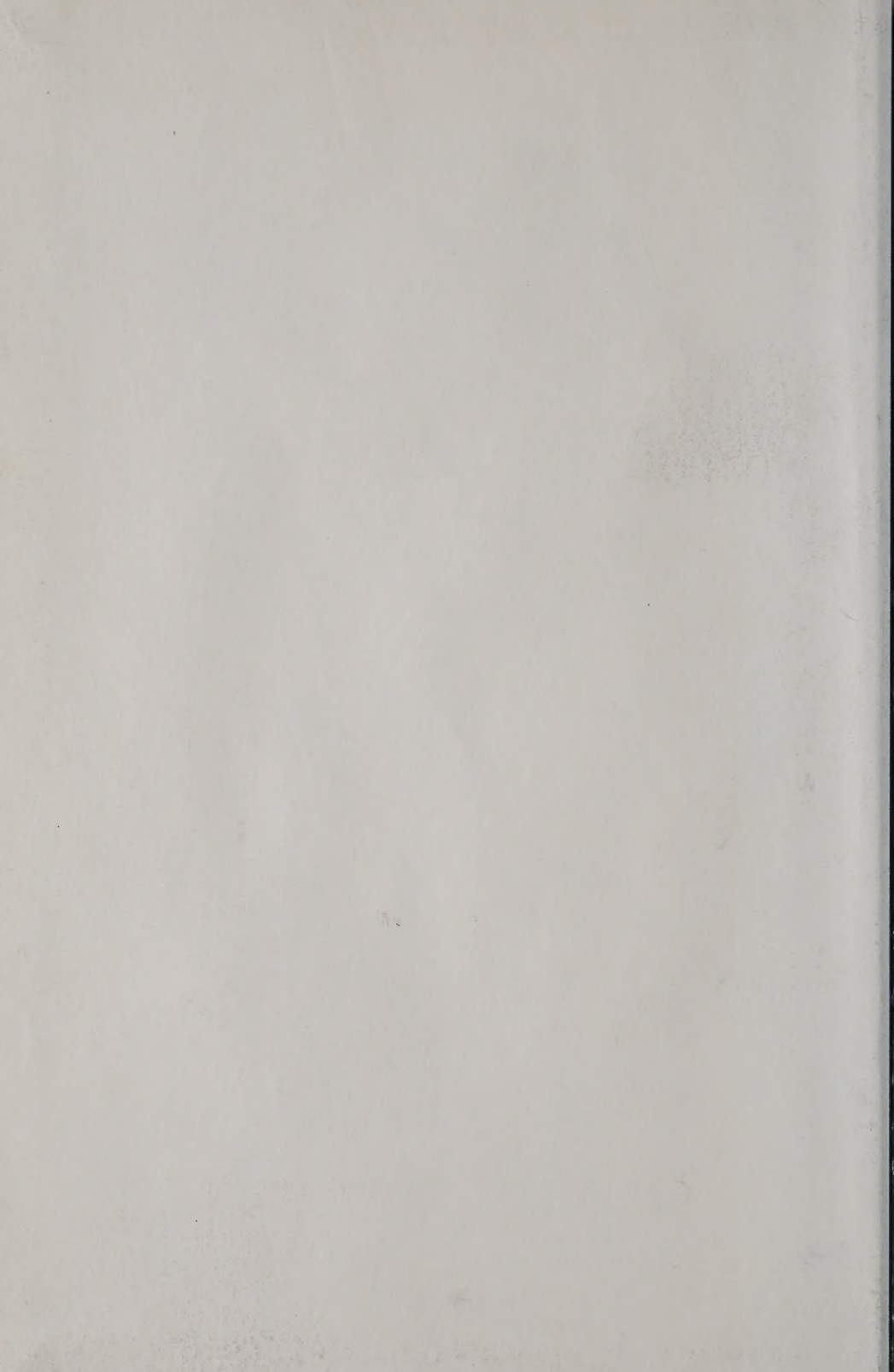
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The History
of
58th
Armored
Field Artillery
Battalion

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On 1 October 1941, at Fort Knox, Kentucky the 58th Field Artillery Battalion (Armored) was activated. The original personnel were drawn from the 22nd Field Artillery Battalion (Armored), 54th Field Artillery Battalion (Armored), Armored Force School and Armored Force Replacement Training Center at Fort Knox. The new Battalion, under command of Major JOHN G. HOWARD, had an original strength of 35 officers and 315 Enlisted Men.

In infancy the Battalion was nourished in the confines of Fort Knox's "Tent City", and the only barracks were the well-known pyramidal tents. Winter was cold in Fort Knox, and overheated Sibley stoves were constantly setting tents afire, and the earliest recollection of guard duty in the 58th is of the G. I. patrolling the area complete with fire extinguisher and baseball bat.

On December 15, 1941, Battery "D" of the Battalion was inactivated, and 6 Officers and 107 Enlisted Men were transferred to the 705th Tank Destroyer Battalion, leaving the 58th with the nucleus of its present three firing batteries, Headquarters Battery, and Service Battery. On the same date the Medical Detachment was also activated. Gradual additions to the strength raised it to 48 Officers and 473 Enlisted Men by January 1, 1942, at which time the Battalion was redesignated 58th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, an organic unit of the 5th Armored Division.

Captain BERNHARD W. McQUADE assumed command of the Battalion on 31 January 1942. On February 11th, the Battalion was split—58 men going to the 6th Armored Division, 124 to the 8th Armored Division, and the balance, 18 Officers and 240 Enlisted Men making a permanent change of station to Camp Cooke, California, arriving on 16 Febr. 1942.

On 10 March 1942, Major BERTRAM A. HOLZWORTH assumed command of the Battalion. During that month 427 replacements came to the Battalion, to receive their basic training on the wind-swept sands of Camp Cooke, and to be assigned to the Battalion on 18 May 1942. Thus, the Battalion entered its artillery training with a complement of 22 Officers and 717 Enlisted Man.

During the latter part of May the Battalion was alerted, and on the 31st, together with certain other elements of the 5th Armored Division, moved down the coast to the vicinity of Los Angeles, ostentatiously to protect the Pacific Coast from the Japanese Navy. No serious development came of this threat, but the Battalion did make its initial step on the climb to the pinnacle of fame when a lowly Service Battery Private looked upon the wine when it was red, and decided to sleep in the same tent with the Commanding General of Combat Command "A".

On 26 June 1942, Lt. Col. HOLZWORTH was transferred to the 95th Field Artillery, and Major

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Mc QUADE re-assumed command of the Battalion.

Training continued at Camp Cooke, until August 6th, when the 5th Armored Division began movement to the California desert for maneuvers. At Freda, California, The Battalion bivouaced and tried to acclimate itself to the withering heat. The first few days in this sun-baked oven saw men collapsing of heat prostration, and the remainder dragging listlessly under temperatures ranging as high as 142 degrees. When the Battalion had struggled through the perspiration and dust of one overnight problem, and was just beginning to feel it could stick it out, orders came down to prepare to move to A. P. Hill, Virginia; and on August 31st, movement was begun by train to temporary change of station at Camp A. P. Hill.

Early in the morning of September 7th the Battalion detrained into the rain and red mud of Ole Virginny. In the wee, small hours, and under a steady downpour they formed two ranks, paired off, and pitched pup tents. It was rough, men, it was rough!! The Battalion remained at A. P. Hill for nearly a month, during which time almost everyone received three-day passes, and everyone got the diarrhea. Here also 18 brand-new Carriage 105 mm Howitzer M-7's (SP) were forced upon them. This was the go-ahead signal for Camp Kilmer, N. J. on October 11th. Things were happening fast, and it began to look as though the

Battalion was going somewhere besides home on furlough.

At Camp Kilmer it was no longer a secret in the Battalion that the destination was overseas. The Battalion was in "quarantine" now, they were told — the last few days preparation for overseas. The mail censor came into the men's lives; the Battalion location must remain secret and no mention must be made to those "outside" of the impending embarkation. The first morning at Kilmer ushered in a clothing check an affair which became more or less a daily routine during the Battalion's stay there. In the morning, first thing, you scattered your belongings over the bed—each night you packed them carefully away in the barracks bags, and the next morning did it all over again. Everyone must have photographs taken for identification cards, so they all marched down and filed through, while bored photographers snapped them in off-guard poses. No one ever found out what happened to the pictures. Just another of those things, I guess.

The personnel section became a madhouse, with last minute allotments, insurance, safe-arrival cards, replacements, transfers, to be taken care of. The safe-arrival cards, to be mailed out to the families when the men had arrived at their overseas destination, furnish another minor mystery of the war. Apparently a large part of the Battalion never "safely arrived".



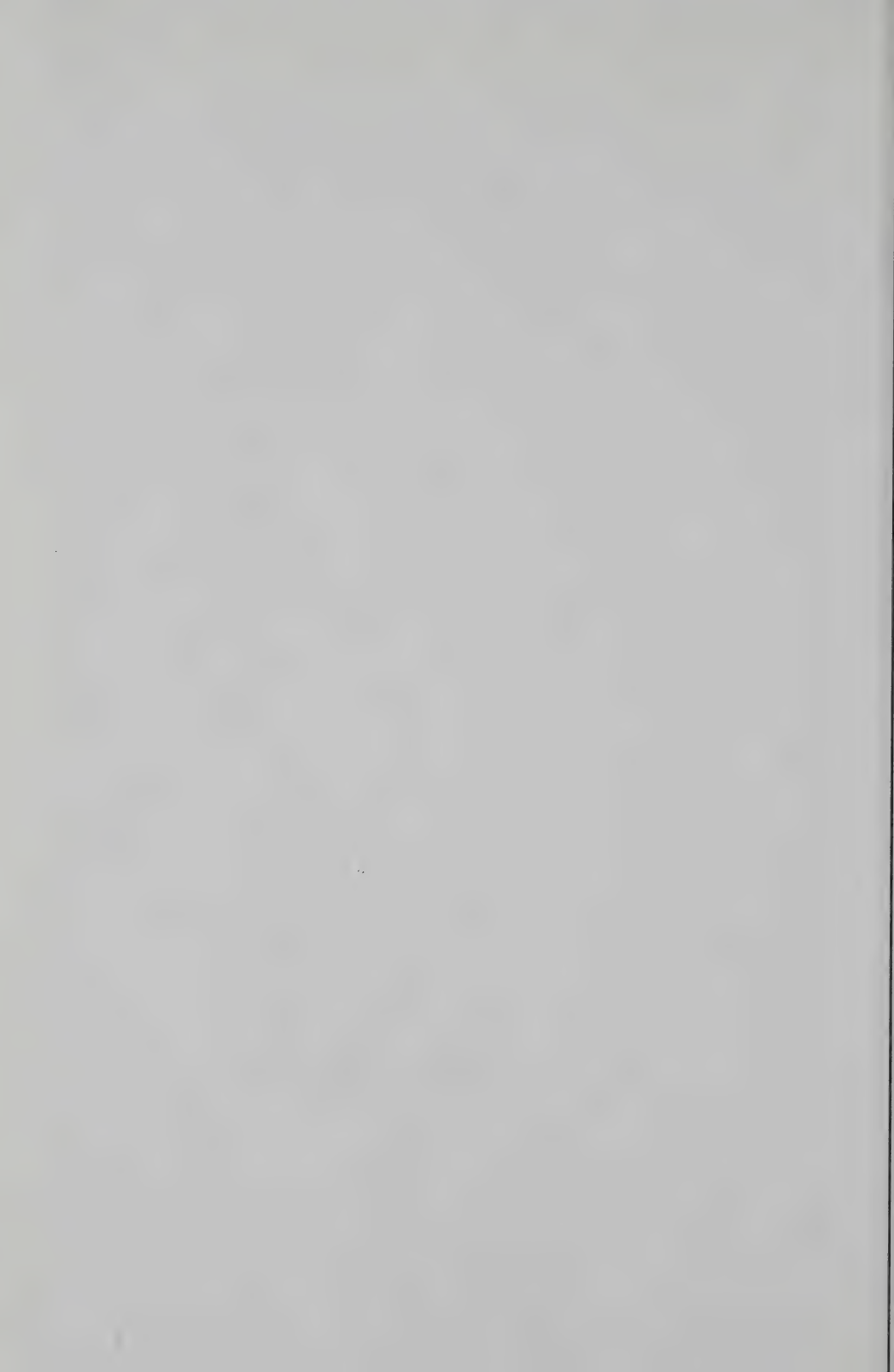
After the Army way, there must be a "dry-run" before the real thing comes off. Thus, the Battalion loped from the barracks to the railroad station with full field and one barracks bag-just to see how it felt. Similarly, one afternoon the Battalion was lined up and filed through a dummy gangway, in loading order.

The phone booths in the P. X. and the Service Club did a rushing business those last few days. The men could not give any information, but there was an urge to have one more chat with the folks, the wife, or the gal friend. When the 58th finally sailed away, they left a sizable wake of collect phone bills. And the packages that went home, clothing and equipment must be limited to T/BA requirements, and all those oxfords, extra socks, underwear, etc., must be sent home, turned in, or thrown away. About 10 percent was sent home, 10 percent turned in, 5 percent thrown away, and 75 percent tucked in between blankets and in pockets of overcoats.

Finally, on the morning of November 1st, the Battalion lined up in front of the barracks, and trudged off to the station. On the train they sat in the midst of a sea of barracks bags and equipment. A few hours later they dismounted at the terminal, and crowded onto the ferry. Going across the harbor to the pier the ferry skirted the Statue of Liberty. It was probably a common thought, "When'll we see you next, Sis?"

Then the Battalion walked down under the sheds of the pier, up the gangway and cleated walk to the deck of the Santa Rosa. Any illusions about traveling first class were quickly dispelled as the men stumbled down to C and D Decks and viewed the hammock-like bunks. The next morning, November 2nd, the men awakened to the gentle roll of the ship. She had shoved off during the night, and the Battalion was on its way; where to no one had a very definite idea. Appetites were still fairly hearty, and the men converged on the mess hall on A Deck. There they filed through what had apparently once been the ship's ball room, past an array of steam tables. Five feet inside the hall the men lost their hearty appetites, not to regain them the remainder of the trip. They tripped gaily and innocently through the doors, and there the essence of steamed scrambled eggs of dubious vintage smote them like a whiplash. It was a terrible let-down-but the men of the 58th were soldiers. They came back again and again, pale but determined. It seems not possible that the field of battle could hold terrors for men who have survived the chow line aboard the Santa Rosa.

Shortly after breakfast the men were allowed up on deck and many of them spent the greater part of their time during the trip up there. Each man was given a lifebelt, or jacket rather, to be worn at all times. They were cautioned to sleep with clothing on, "just in case". Inasmuch as they



were wearing "long-handled" drawers at the time, this became rather unpleasant. As a result, each night the men turned in displaying various forms of undress.

Before long, symptoms of "mal-de-mer" made themselves apparent. The seas were not unusually rough, but there is something about the steady pitch and toss of ordinary ground swells that eventually got some of the men. A large garbage can was placed in the middle of the sleeping quarters, forward on C Deck, for use in disposing of trash. It was quickly converted into a gathering place for those unfortunates whose insides revolted under the strain. It was quite common to see three or four dog-faces clinging grimly to the edges of the can and giving it all they had.

If you found a group with heads together, with no can in the middle, you could conclude that it was a poker or crap game. That was about the limit of the recreational facilities on board, and the men made the most of it. Some big games developed. All day long a number of sets of ivory cubes would keep galloping up and down the deck. By the time the Battalion got off the boat, some of the boys had paid for a handsome first class passage, while others landed with small fortunes.

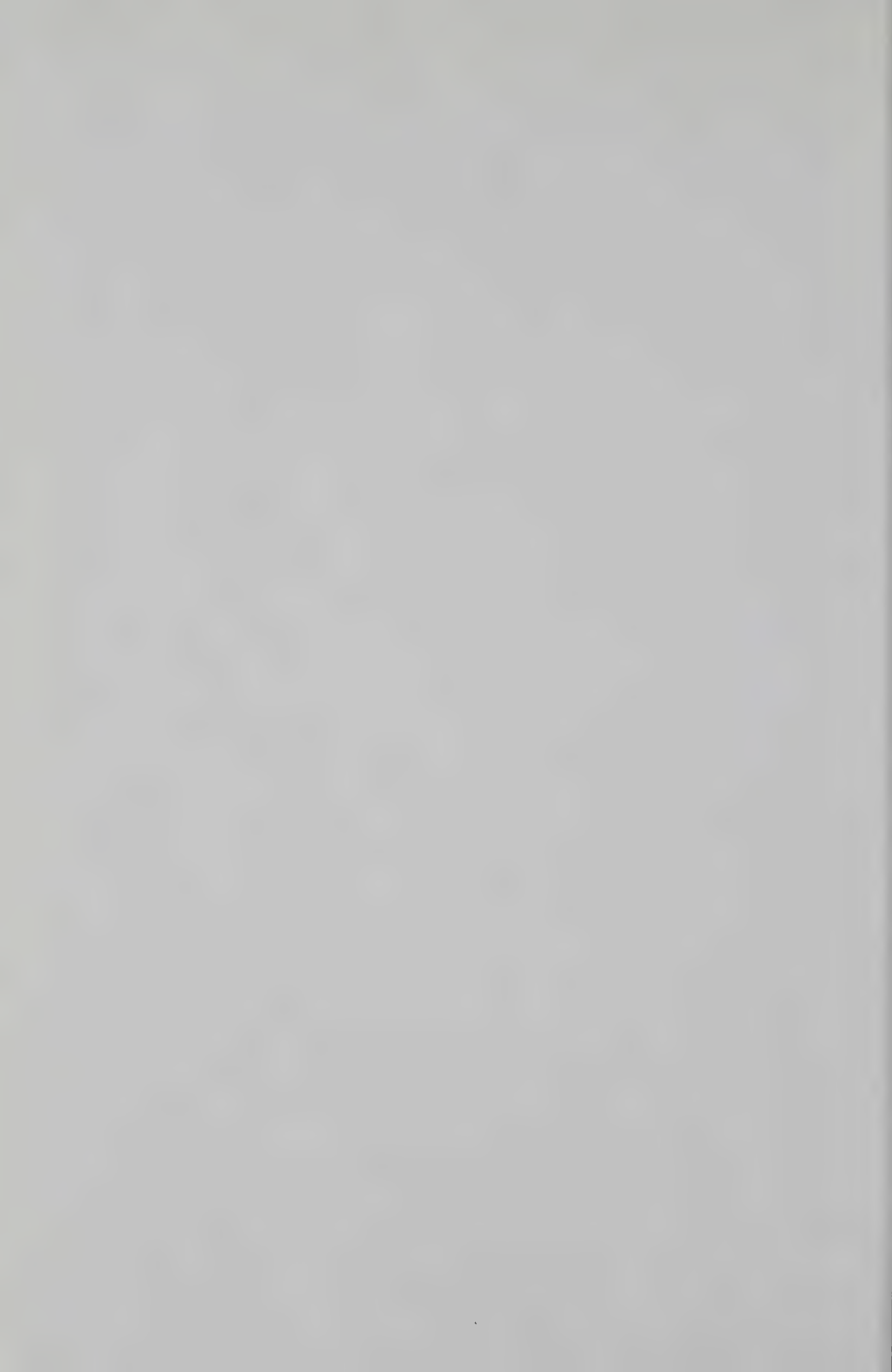
A few days out, the anti-aircraft crews started practicing periodically, and opened up with 40 mm and .50 Caliber guns, to send tracer arcing out over the water. These occasional outbursts, coupled with two or three

accidental discharges of one of the bow guns, encouraged the changing of the ship's name from "Santa Rosa" to "Roaring Rosa".

The ship carried a large stock of P. X. supplies, especially candy. The men consumed an ungodly amount of Hershey bars, Baby Ruth bars, and soft drinks. Today the remaining men in the Battalion swear to high heaven that chocolate bars kept them alive crossing the Atlantic. Going thru the chow line was a mere test of courage and fortitude—they got their nourishment in cartons from the P. X.

A couple of days of comparatively rough weather were experienced. The ship developed quite a roll. Captain BREWER mounted a pendulum on the wall of his stateroom, with a scale to register the degree of the roll. After every particularly violent lurch, officers would pour into the stateroom to ascertain whether or not a new high had been recorded. The mess hall was really a mess on those days. In addition to the usual risks confronting the hardy wayfarer in the chowline, the deck was coated with gravy. When maneuvering in the open, away from supporting tables, it was best to maintain a slight crouch, with knees slightly bent and body well forward, as in skiing. Sun valley never produced a downhill Slalom run like the course from the last steam table to the slop bucket on the Santa Rosa on a rough day.

When about six days out, the men were notified that their destination was to be the West Coast of Africa.



An invasion force was already striking at the continent at several points. The appointed landing place for the Battalion was to be Casablanca, but that would have to depend on the success of the initial invasion forces. There was a possibility, they were told, they might have to land under fire themselves. So, (yes, you guessed it) a dry run was held on landing operations. Large cargo nets, for use in clambering over the side of the ship, were hung in one of the hatches between C and D decks, and one fine morning the men donned full field, hauled themselves up narrow companionways, out on deck, and down again to C deck, where they dropped, one by one, down the net to the lower deck.

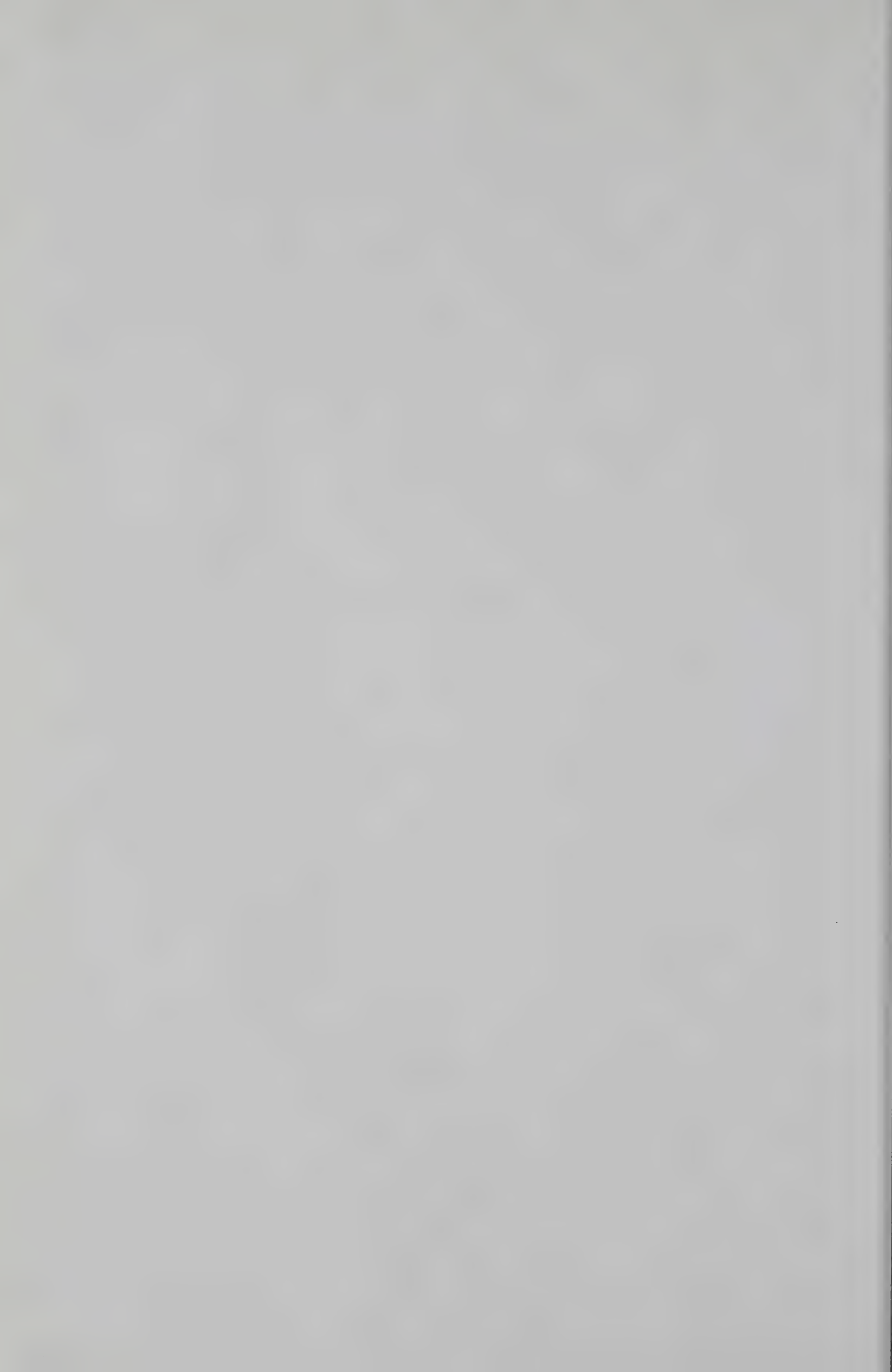
Daily estimates as to the position of the ship ran riot-rumor had it spotted all the way from the coast of Portugal to the Cape of Good Hope. A wall map on B deck was so well gone over that by the time the ship was ten days out the whole eastern Atlantic was one grease spot. In early afternoon of November 17th the first blurry haze on the horizon, which rapidly developed into land, was picked up. This trip of the Santa Rosa knocked two full days off Columbus' best time for the same crossing. From the deck of the Santa Rosa the green and white beauty of Casablanca was a most welcome sight. From the distance it was clean and fresh and cool.

Late that afternoon the ship felt its way into the harbor of Casablanca,

while the destroyers paced back and forth just outside. There was no question about it, the war had visited the Casablanca waterfront. Freighters and passenger liners were heeled over, or resting on the shallow bottom, with only the rigging showing above the water. A cruiser and destroyer lay half-submerged on the far fringe of the harbor. Wreckage floated on the water. As we were warped along through the debris and up to the dock, the men crowded the rails and stared at their first eyefull of the wake of battle. On the far side of the pier could be seen the superstructure of the huge French battleship Jean Bart, settled on the bottom of her berth where American bombers had found her on the 9th, helpless, not yet ready for the sea.

At about 8:00 A. M. the next morning the men crawled into full field, slung "A" barracks bags over their shoulders and marched (the word is used in a very liberal sense) off the Rosa. To most of the men that first step off the gangplank was their first step on foreign soil. They were invaders leading the way for America's long awaited "push". But you can't think of those things when all your soul and being is concentrated on keeping your barracks bag from rolling around your back and decapitating you.

So the big moment went by with no contemplations on its significance. They probably looked more like a gang of stevedores at Memphis than a conquering army at Casablanca.



Once off the ship the men lined up, readjusted their burdens, and took off in as close to a march formation as could be managed under the circumstances. The physical condition of the Battalion, after the long stay on ship, was not the best, and the half-mile they carried the barracks bags was long and torturous. When they finally reached the dumping place for the bags, some of them were dragging on the ground—and that's not all that was dragging. With the disposal of the bags, morale rose sharply and the march to the bivouac area was resumed. There were no bands or throngs of people throwing roses in our path, but the atmosphere was decidedly friendly. It was soon apparent that the city was not as clean and white as it had appeared from the sea, but the long trip was over, and the Battalion was safely landed on good solid terra firma.

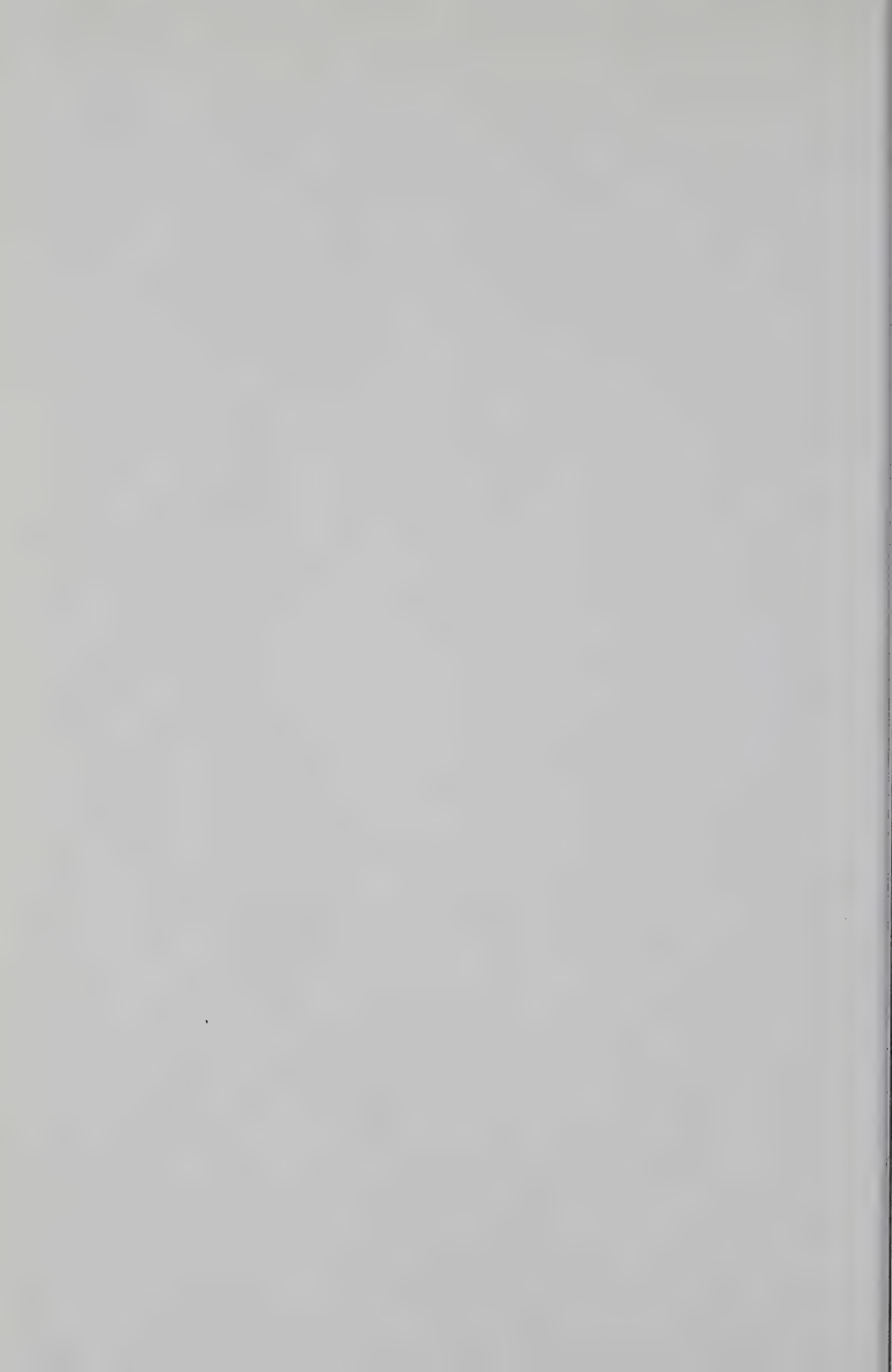
The men had on long woolies, the day was warm, and it was with a definite feeling of relief that they reached the bivouac area, some six miles from town, and sat down to eat a K ration. It was their first K ration, and it tasted like the dinner your mother always fixes on your birthday. After the cuisine of the Santa Rosa, that tin of cheese and those biscuits were delicious.

The new bivouac area, unromantically enough, was an Arab cow pasture. No rolling dunes, with desert Sheiks riding out of the sunset caroling the "Desert Song". No camel caravans trekking across the wastes.

Just an evacuated heifer haven, with a few of the dispossessed moodily browsing on the outskirts. But, home it was to be, and the men set to work pitching tents. Simultaneously with this the rains came. It rained—it rained—and it rained. In the midst of the downpour the barracks bags came up by Arab Express. Next morning all the equipment was a soggy mess, and next few days were spent trying to dry out the stuff between showers. The large portion of the Battalion's memory of Casablanca is reflected in little pools of muddy water, and incidents remain in the memory like the time Sgt. Hopkins called the C. P. with information that a supply ship had been torpedoed in the battery street.

After a few days spent pulling themselves together after the ocean voyage, and adjusting living quarters, the men fell into the familiar routine of training, calisthenics, and classes. Road marches became the order of the day, and life somewhat resumed its normal course. The big social event was the first pass—a chance to roam the streets of Casablanca and peek into the mysteries of North Africa — also a chance to bend the elbow at a few bars. We walked into town on the first trip — in our wrinkled O.D's, drawn from the recesses of our bags.

Casablanca is a rather large city, with fairly modern sections. As in most of North Africa, French is the language spoken (aside from Arabic) and the dominant European ele-



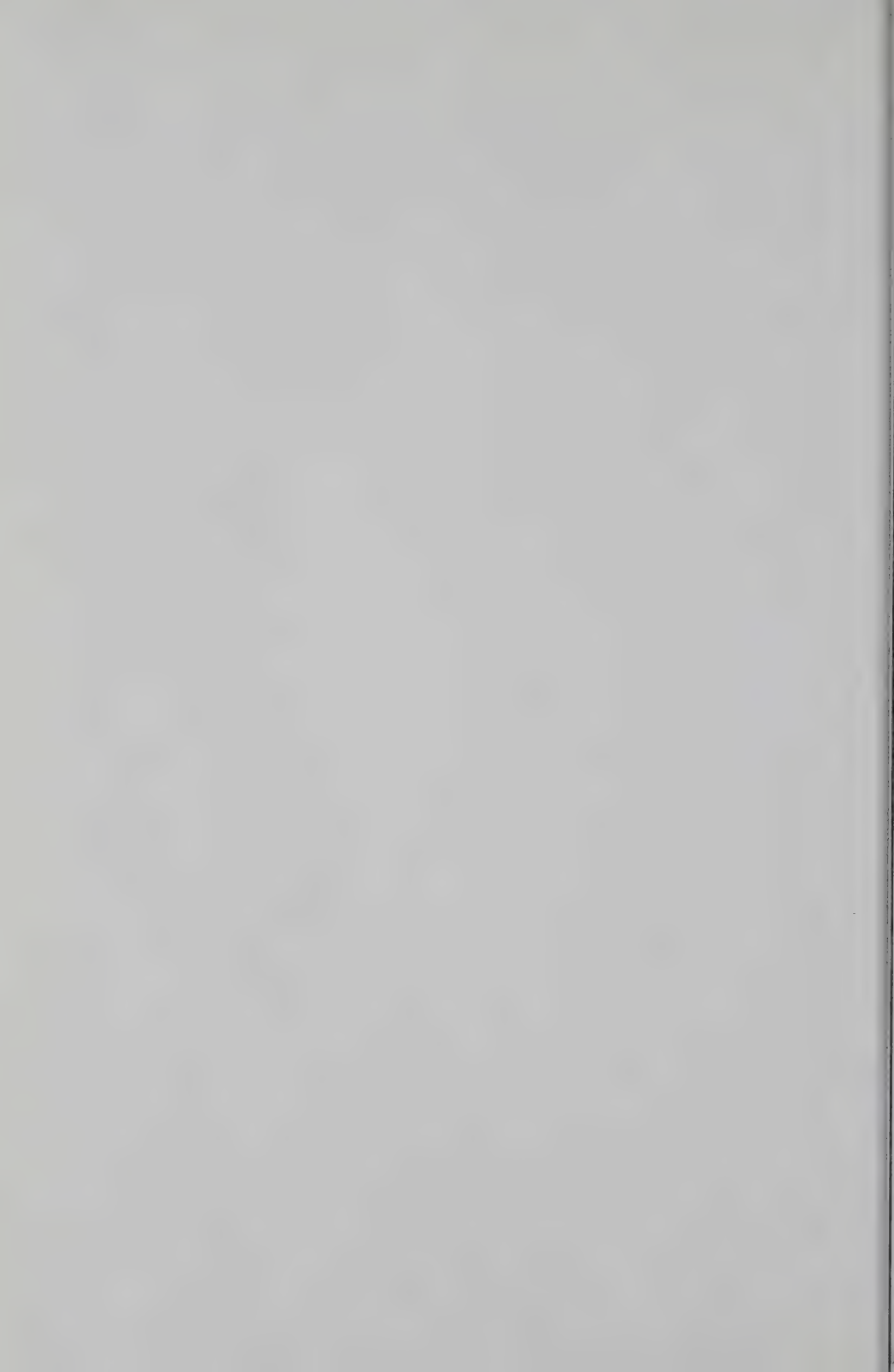
ment is French. The language offered some obstacle to us at first, but by signs and trial and error, we more or less surmounted that in short order. The exchange rate was 75 francs to the dollar (later changed to 50 francs). At first prices were quite reasonable, and the American dollar went a long way. However, the Arab merchants and vendors soon awoke to the gold mine which was being visited upon them, and raised their prices accordingly. The principal merchandise in the shops was leather goods, for which Morocco is well known. Portfolios, purses, hand bags, bill folds, slippers, of intricate design were on display in about every fourth show-window in town. Liquid refreshment consisted mainly of beer and red wine. The beer was fair, but the bulk of the wine was not too good for one thing, the average American is apparently not accustomed to the sour red wine of the French. The restaurants boasted of a very limited bill-of-fare, leaning very strongly to egg omelettes and fish, and cabbage soup. The pastry shops received a big play from the soldiers, most of the products, however, suffering from lack of sugar and flavoring.

We became quite conscious of the housing problem during the stay at Casablanca. The men started out with simple pup-tents pitched just as they had always been trained to pitch them. The officers got the idea first of bettering their standard of living, and shortly the officers, quarters began to sport rock and

board walls for the tents, raised platforms for the beds, etc. Capt PATON'S imposing residence was promptly christened "Paton's Medina". As more lumber was obtained, the men gradually added to their tents, and dug down the floors. Hay had been obtained for mattresses, and the boys got along quite well in this respect. Each tent was surrounded by a miniature moat against the occasional cloud-bursts.

The Arab Children, and even grown-ups had developed a passionate fondness for chewing-gum, chocolate, cigarettes, and our hard candy from the rations. Everywhere we went we were greeted with cries of "Cig'et? Choonbomb? Bon-Bon?". All the way across North Africa the same war-cry was heard.

The morning of December 31st Jerry visited Casablanca with a few planes no one seemed to have any definite idea how many. About three in the morning the men awoke to what sounded like a general invasion. They piled out of their tents to find the sky a network of tracer, with searchlights crawling and probing, ack-ack flashing here and there. As they watched, a bomber was caught by the lights, and then things really cut loose. Everything from 30 calibers to 90 mm's were thrown at it. The Battalion yelled and cheered till it resembled a Saturday afternoon at Ebbetts Field. Eventually things quieted down, and we retired to our tents. A few minutes later the anti-aircraft cut loose again, and we came



out and rooted a little longer. It was all very exciting, and provided a lovely night spectacle. Later, in an olive grove at Maknassy we were to remember it. At any rate, the next morning the Battalion dug slit trenches.

The Battalion was selected to furnish honor guards for several occasions, visits of French Generals, Admirals, etc. The climax of the honor guard business came with the visit of the President and Winston Churchill at Casablanca. Perhaps it couldn't properly be called an "honor guard", but a detail from the Battalion patrolled the road down which the President and party drove. It all came as quite a surprise to all the men one event which was not preceded by a batch of latrine rumors.

The Battalion also furnished unloading details for the dock during the first few weeks, when supplies and equipment were coming in. A few of the tents broke out with unheard of rations shortly after these details. Apparently a few of the lads had made the best of their opportunities.

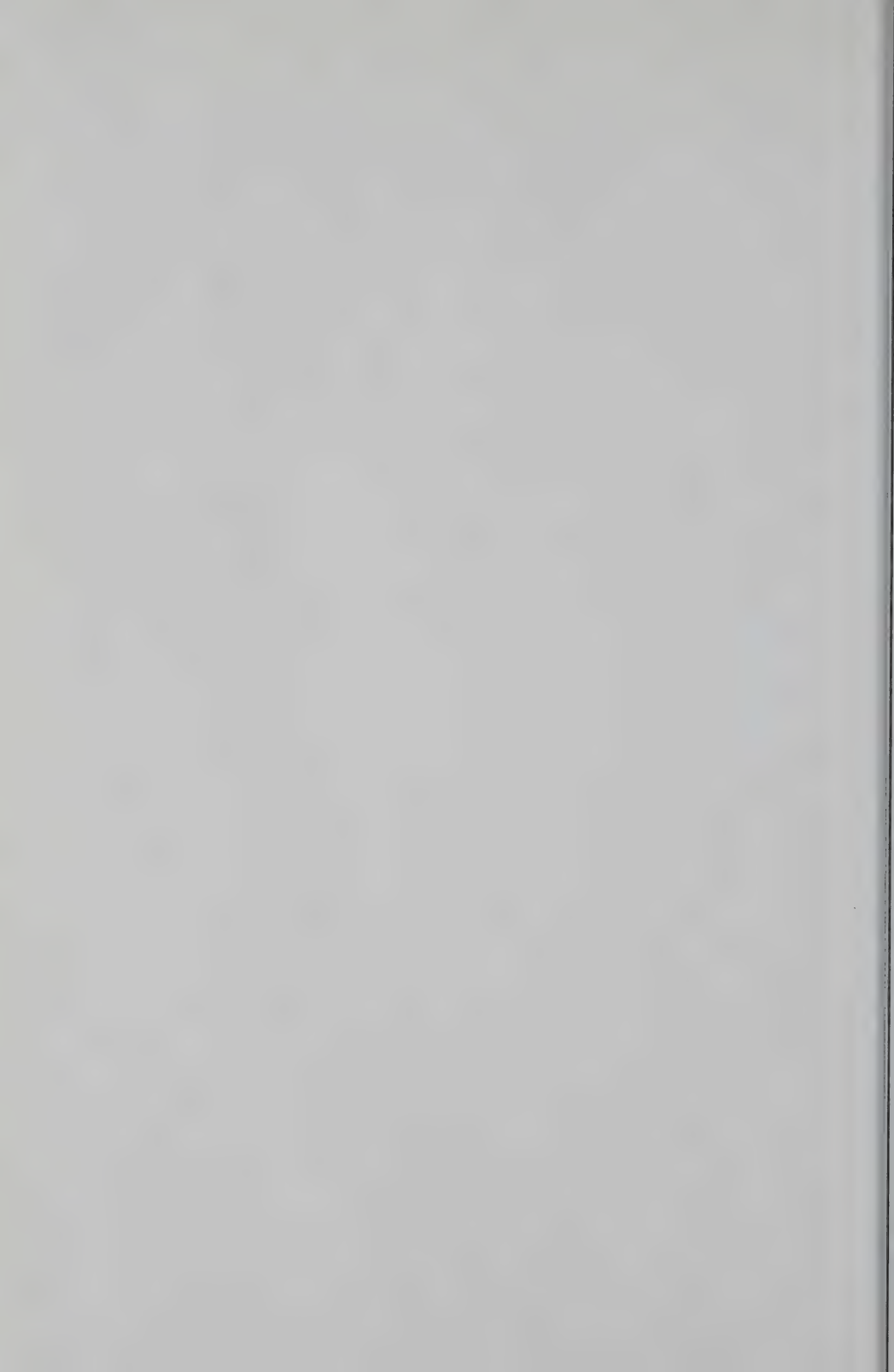
Usually the day was started out with a half-mile run before breakfast and each morning the chill dawn echoed to the clop, clop, clop of the G. I. shoes on the macadam road skirting the battalion area. The object was to enable each man to run a mile in 10 minutes with full field. A mile in ten minutes is not such a rugged undertaking, but with

full field, and rifle or tommy gun slapping you on the behind it is not such a pushover. Headquarters Battery still remembers the morning Capt. Paton led his boys double-timing in full field down the road-and Sgt. Parker of Service Battery trumpeted out "Ahunting We Will Go" on his bugle.

Christmas in Casablanca was more or less limited to memories of other Xmas'es, and hopes for those to come. A clump of sage-like bush, placed outside the orderly room bravely tried to carry on and perform an unaccustomed duty as a Xmas tree. An Engineer outfit from down the road came up on Xmas Eve and staged a tableau of the Nativity. Their costumes were very impromptu, and the outstanding character was a very unwilling donkey-but it did bring a little more of Xmas down around the men.

After three month's stay at Casablanca, on the 16th of February the Battalion "pulled their stakes" and took the first step north to Rabat—a few kilometers closer to the battle-front. It was a shame to leave all those fine dwellings—our own dug-outs as well as the stone and cement foundations on Nob Hill (Officer's Quarters).

The Battalion had been assigned to 5th Field Artillery Group on 25 January 1943, along with the 62nd Armored Field Artillery Battalion, and the 65th Armored Field Artillery Battalion. Colonel NEWTON W. JONES commanded the group.



About ten miles out of Rabat the Battalion went into a bivouac area in a cork forest. The Cork forest was quite a change from the Arab cow pasture. In case there is any doubt, the corks do not grow on trees like walnuts — the bark is the cork, and is cut and peeled off the trunk of the tree. In accordance with 58th tradition it rained the day the Battalion got there, but after that the weather was increasingly warm. There was plenty of shade. The only ones not happy about the situation were the guards, who had a bit of trouble getting oriented in the woodland on dark nights. After a fight talk from the O. D. at Guard mount, the guards would come out with blood in their eye, and it could be marked as a good night to remain in the sanctuary of your tent after dark.

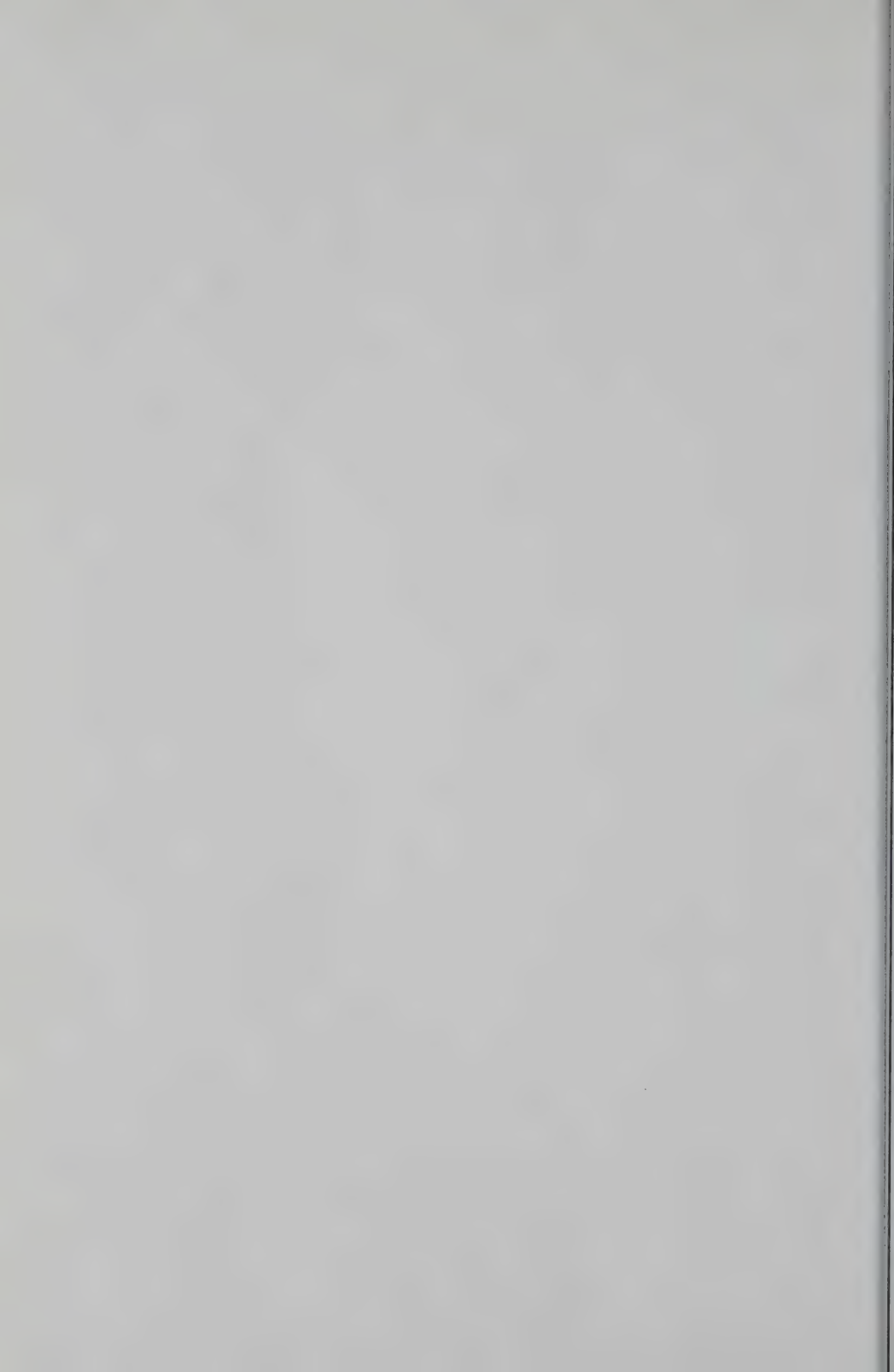
The Battalion remained at Rabat approximately three weeks, and on March 7th began movement to the front. Two trains left on the 7th, two trains and the Battalion Commander and convoy of wheeled vehicles on the 8th, and one train on March 9th. The track vehicles were loaded on flat cars, and the crew rode right along in the vehicle. Some of the men could sleep in box cars, but there must be a guard on the vehicle at all times. The view from the flat cars was much better, so the vehicles were always crowded during the daytime.

Shortly after crossing into Algeria hills and mountains were encountered. And with them came the tun-

nels. Tunnels in the United States are more or less commonplace, and the traveler takes them in stride. But traveling through tunnels in the Atlas Mountains, on a flat car on a French train is something of a novelty. On the longer ones the engine would bound eagerly up to the entrance, like a terrier running a rat into a hole. A quarter of the way through it would begin to proceed more laboriously and cautiously, until at about the half-way mark it would shuffle to a halt and take a breather, while the men sat in the darkness, soft coal smoke, and steam, bitterly cursing the engineer, North African railways, mountains, and life in general. When the cars emerged into life light once more, the machine guns were nicely coated with steam rust, and over everything and everyone a cloak of soot and cinders.

The scenery increased in beauty going through the mountains. The Atlas ranges furnish some grand views, and were especially welcome after the flat, comparatively desolate country of Morocco. The grades often slowed down the train, until the little Arabs could run alongside for long distances, imploring the men to pass out the bon-bons.

The last train-load of half-tracks and M-7's closed into the bivouac area in the hills above Tebessa, Algeria on the 17th of March. It started to rain that night, and the Battalion arose the next morning in a steady downpour. Orders were received to move the Battalion to Feriana, and

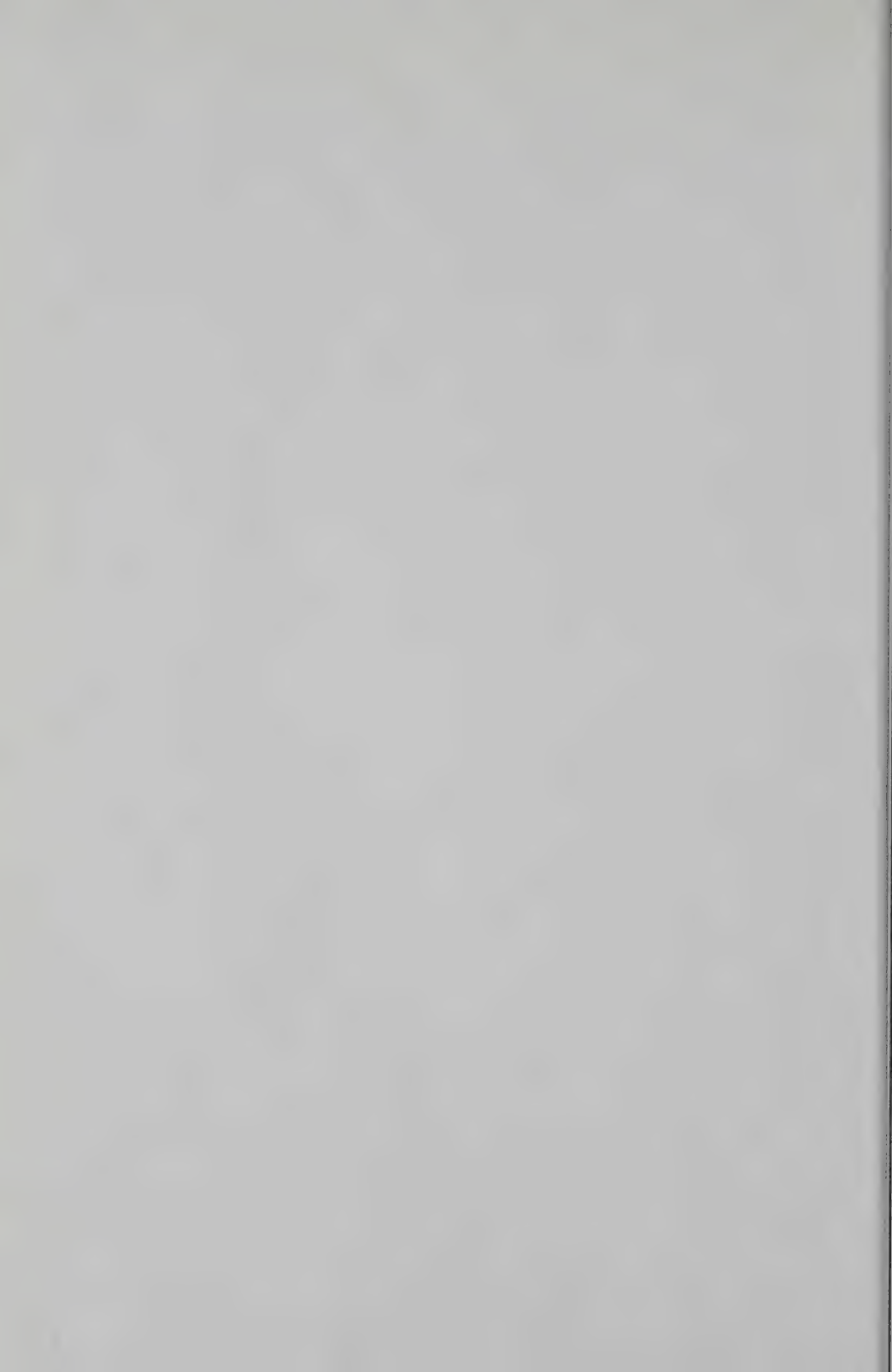


shortly before noon the column started out, down the mountain, past Tebessa and on the road toward Feriana. A bivouac north of Feriana was reached that afternoon. The next day, March 19th, orders were received to join the 1st Armored Division. At this time our forces were just beginning to push back after stopping the vicious drive of Rommel's Afrika Corps in the vicinity of Tebessa and Gafsa. Shortly before midnight on the 19th, the Battalion contacted the 1st Armored Division at Madene El Feds, Tunisia, and at 0215 on the morning of the 20th began movement into the first combat position. And the first M-7's to be used by American troops lurched and growled their way through the Tunisian night, while the crews awaited the morning and the first taste of fight. At 0600 the guns moved into position, and at 0715 the Battalion fired its first combat rounds, registering on a hill crest which later proved to have been an enemy O. P.

One other position was occupied that morning. In the afternoon the first enemy planes appeared high over-head, engaged in a dog-fight. Also in late afternoon the first prisoners (Italians) passed through the area, in very good spirits. At midnight the Battalion arrived in position 4 miles east of Sened Station. In the morning of the 21st, at a position 2 miles east of Sened Station, an enemy machine gun nest and tanks were brought under fire by the Battalion. Enemy planes swooped over

the position, but appeared to be traveling too fast, or too interested elsewhere to bother it.

Early in the morning of the 22nd of March a move was begun towards Maknassy. A temporary position was occupied at 5:00 A. M., and a position in the vicinity of Maknassy finally reached at 0830 in the morning. Up to this point the Battalion had been breezing along, firing occasionally, with no return fire, and it seemed more like a service practice or maneuver than actual battle. At Maknassy the enemy took the time and trouble to disillusion the boys on this point. Enemy planes appeared over the Battalion area, and bombed nearby points in the morning and afternoon. One bomb fell in "B" Battery area. The Battalion greeted the planes with a creditable display of fire from the .50 and .30 Caliber machine guns. There was a lot of noise, but apparently no casualties took place on either side. On the afternoon of the 22nd a reconnaissance party from the Battalion was shelled while selecting a new position, and the Battalion Commander's half-track strafed and shot-up by enemy planes, but without casualties. Late that night a position was occupied just east of Maknassy, in an olive grove. (The Battalion was to become quite familiar with olive groves in the next few weeks-the olive branch may be a symbol of peace, but not with a 105mm howitzer sticking out from behind it). The next morning when the Messerschmitts come over one of



them was struck in the bomb rack by anti-aircraft fire. One wing came off, and the ship seemed to come apart in mid-air. There were pieces of Messerschmitt all over the area.

On March 24th the Battalion moved out of the olive grove, into the open, but that didn't last long. The position was shelled continuously during the 25th, two m-7's were lost, and on the evening of the 25th the 58th staged a "strategic-withdrawal" to the confines of the olive grove.

From the 25th of March to the 9th of April the Battalion remained in the olive grove. Enemy artillery had found it by now, and the 58th was serenaded frequently by choirs of 88 millimeter guns, of which the Germans seemed to have quite a few. A number of 88 shells were thrown into the fire direction area one Sunday, forcing that section to change its position. Apparently they got out in good time, because Jerry really laid them in just after they left. A large percentage of the shells were either duds or armor-piercing, as they failed to explode upon landing. The rising scream of the 88 shell in full flight became quite familiar, and was dubbed "Whistling Dick". First would be heard the dull "Boom, Boom, Boom" in rapid succession—then Wheeeee! Wheeeee!! Wheeeee!! WHAM! WHAM!! WHAM!! These were always accompanied by a sprint and dive for the slit-trench.

Someone has said that the greatest invention of the war was the slit-trench. It is one piece of work under-

taken and accomplished without urging. A slit-trench is like money in the bank—something on which to fall back when the going gets rough. It is a cosy nook to which the soldier may retire hastily when the cares of the day (and the 88 shells) close in around him. On occasion it can become his temple and house of prayer. If you don't think so, just try lying in one while that whistle shrieks that it's going to crawl right in with you. The much-discussed democracy of the American Army reaches its zenith in a slit-trench and there is always room for one more.

Lt. Hipp remarked long afterward that the Battalion had 12 Stukas attached to it during the stay at Maknaassy. They came over sharply on the hour three times a day. And occasionally the night shift would go up hanging parachute flare "like boulevard lights", and searching for a likely target in the resulting glaring illumination. Their bombing however, was surprisingly inaccurate.

It was warm, quite warm, in the daytime now — and cold at night. There was always vehicle guard, and a couple hours a night of shivering wakefulness beside the vehicle. At night spasmodic fire from the front lines could be heard — the American and German machine guns playing a tenor and alto duet in the dark hours. Then the steady rumbling roll of mortar fire. The Lord deliver us from the Infantry and a shallow slit trench with the enemy throwing everything but the kitchen sink.



The men were eating chiefly C rations now, as they did all through the campaign, though in its latter stages the kitchen trucks came up quite often. Appetites were pretty well maintained — though the shiny little tin cans of stew and hash were bitterly cursed — and the hard candy that came with them.

During this period the Battalion was in support of the 60th Infantry Regiment, 1st Armored Division. On April 1st word was received that Major McQUADE was promoted to Lt. Colonel, effective March 20th. And on April 9th the Battalion departed from the Olive Grove at Maknassy in a cloud of dust.

With bouyant heart and armored chassis,

We arrived before Maknassy,
Where the 88's sleek and sassy,
Spoke to us in accent brassy;
Bid us pause at old Maknassy.
The situation reached impasse,
And we stayed at old Maknassy;
Far from stream or hillside grassy,
Far from home and fair-skinned
lassy.

We got damned sick of old Maknassy,
We got damned sick of old Maknassy.

After a 68 mile, dusty, all night march, the Battalion arrived at Bir El Hafey, where equipment and ordnance were checked. The next area, Sadaguia, was reached the afternoon of April 12th. From here the Battalion traveled 208 miles to La Calle, Algeria, arriving April 16th. The Mareth Line had been cracked by the British 8th Army, American forces

had effected their junction with the 8th, and Rommel was being crowded now-and crowded fast.

At La Calle the Battalion was attached to the 13th FA Brigade, and on April 21st departed for Beja, Tunisia, 69 miles away. The Battalion approached Beja simultaneously with Spring. The hillsides were beginning to bloom, and the column passed through entire valleys of crimson poppies, spilling down the hills and across the fields. Solid patches of powder blue and gold carpeted the roadside. A number of German tanks were also spilled across the fields in this sector — Mark 1V's and Mark VI's. From Beja the Battalion went into position in the vicinity of Sidi Rovine near midnight of the 23d, high in the hills.

From April 27th to May 4th, the Battalion was in position at Djebel Zeraris, firing intermittently. Enemy planes again came over the position, and bombed in the valley below. A few rounds of enemy artillery came over, but it was neither consistent nor accurate. On May 4th the Battalion moved approximately 12 miles to a position near Eddekhelia. From this position, in the early hours of May 5th, the Battalion joined in the tremendous barrage laid down on the now historic "Hill 609". Enemy artillery fire was falling in the Battalion area during the day and the road was under fire, but no damage was done to the Battalion. The Battalion was supporting the 168th Infantry of the 34th Infantry Division now.

On May 6th the Battalion was attached to the 1st Armored Division, and moved to the vicinity of Mateur. The reconnoitered position, on a Hillside above Mateur, was already occupied by enemy tanks when the Battalion moved up. "A" Battery opened up with direct fire, destroying one tank. Darkness fell with the hill-top still in German possession, tanks burning on the hillside, and tracers arching up from our positions at the foot of the hill, and the Battalion firing time fire on the hill crest. On the morning of May 7th, just after dawn, enemy artillery fire began falling in the Battalion area. Flashes of the enemy guns were clearly visible, and the Counter-battery fire by "A" Battery soon neutralized the enemy position. The Battalion then took the position reconnoitered the previous day, and fired on targets in the vicinity of Ferryville.

On the afternoon of May 7th the Battalion moved to a cross-road two miles north of Ferryville, and fired through the night on enemy tank concentrations. The morning of May 8th the Battalion was moved again through the cheering throngs of Ferryville, to a position five miles east of the town. While in this position, one of the Battalion's Observers 1st Lt. CARL M. JOHNSTONE, observing from a hill over-looking a large valley 10 miles east of Ferryville, found a large concentration of enemy armor and mobile field guns, being displaced in an attempt to stop

the advance of the 1st Armored Division. He directed fires of the Battalion on this concentration for several hours, forcing the enemy vehicles out into the open where our tanks and TD's were able to destroy them.

With the front lines advancing rapidly, the Battalion moved again in the evening of May 8th, and went into position in support of the 13th Armored Regiment. The war had now developed into a field day for our observers, and numerous lucrative targets were fired on by the Battalion. That night large fires burned on the horizon, an indication that the trapped German forces were destroying their equipment.

On the morning of May 9th, our front line elements were pressing forward with little or no resistance on Bizerte. The enemy was beginning to give up in numbers. Finally, at 1121 hours on the morning of May 9th, 1943, the message was received from Division Artillery "Cease firing in all present positions-Germans have surrendered". The Battalion moved again in the afternoon to a final position on the Bizerte-Tunis road. One lone German artillery piece sounded off as the column moved up to the position, but the gunner must have seen the light very shortly, and quiet reigned on the Tunisian front. All the remainder of that day, surrendering German troops moved in procession down out of the hills and Wadis. The war in Africa was over.



From May 11th to 17th the Battalion remained in bivouac 4 miles SE of Mateur, cleaning up, resting, a few men taking passes to Tunis. On the 18th of May the Battalion began movement to a bivouac area at Gastu, Algeria, part going by road, and part by water from Bizerte to Phillipeville. Until June 15th, the Battalion remained in bivouac at Gastu, resting and performing maintenance. Passes were given to Bone, Phillipeville, and Constantine during this period. On June 16th the Battalion moved 210 miles to El Alia, Tunisia, where it remained until July 7th, preparing for the invasion of Sicily.

For the Sicilian invasion, the Battalion was divided into two groups. The first group consisted of a cut-down Headquarters, three firing Batteries (whose guns were taken over by 3rd Division Artillery), three radio half-tracks, ammunition vehicles and a service element. The second group contained the balance of the Battalion. On July 12th, the first group, or first follow-up loaded on LST —351 in the harbor of Bizerte, and the following day, the 13th, pulled away from the dock and joined the convoy proceeding toward Sicily. The invasion was started on the morning of July 10th. At 1500 hours on the afternoon of July 14th, after a calm uneventful trip, LST —351 landed at Licata, Sicily. Waterproofing was removed from the vehicles at an area five miles north of Licata, and the Bat-

talion began the march through the hills to the vicinity of Riesi to support the 3rd Battalion, 30th Infantry, of the 3rd Infantry Division. The move was completed near midnight and parties were sent out to pick up the Battalion's M-7's which had been taken in on the invasion by the 10th, 39th, and 41st Field Artillery Battalions.

The following day, July 15th, all the M-7's reached the Battalion area. One mission was fired during the day, and two or three enemy rounds whistled in, but not too close. On July 16th, orders were received from Division Artillery to move to an assembly area in the vicinity of Favara. This position was reached in mid-afternoon, and shortly thereafter the Battalion fired on enemy infantry and vehicles, causing many enemy casualties, and forcing enemy infantry to come out in the open and surrender. This fire was continued on the morning of the 17th, and in late afternoon the Battalion moved to a position five miles north of Canicatti, in support of the 15th Infantry.

On July 18th the Battalion moved again to Serradifalco, to find that all resistance in the area had collapsed, and at midnight was on the move again to a new position. This constant moving continued through the first days of the campaign, until the Battalion ran out of gas on July 21st, near Corleone, while still supporting the 15th Infantry. From Serradifalco to Mi-



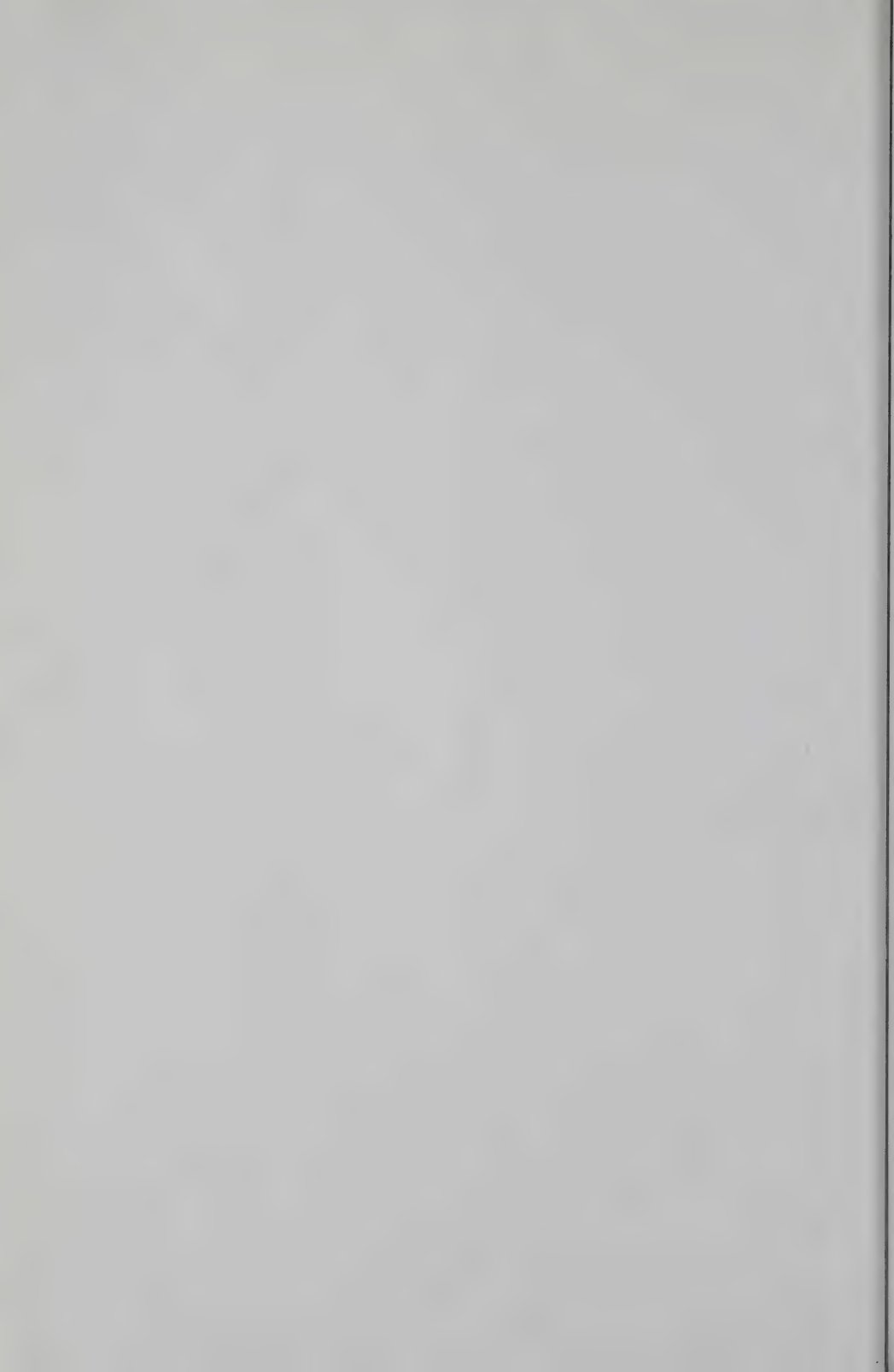
lena, to Station De Sutura, to Mus-someli, Aqua Viva, Castianova, Priss and to Corleone. The opposition consisted mainly of Italians, and the resistance they offered was light, as they frequently ran out in the open and surrendered after two or three rounds from our guns. But the terrain was rugged. Long night marches over the torturous climbing trail-roads of Sicily demanded every last ounce of stamina of the drivers. The Battalion moved from village to village, scarcely pausing long enough to place the guns in position.

On July 22nd the 58th Armored Field Artillery Battalion was given the mission by the 3rd Infantry Division Commander, of driving to the coast, seizing the seacoast town of Trabia, and cutting off the enemy retreat from Palermo to the east. At noon on the 22nd the Battalion began the wild ride, which took it through Godrano where 200 prisoners were captured by the Bn; Cefala where 200 more were taken; Villafrati, Raucina, Ventimiglia. Out of Ventimiglia a bridge had just been blown by the retreating enemy, halting the push while a party from the Battalion devised an impromptu by-pass of the blown bridge and the Battalion continued on the way. At 1740 hours advance elements of the Battalion entered Trabia. There was no resistance, and 1811 prisoners were taken. The retreating enemy had planted mines under the road in the town but these were removed almost voluntarily by

the Italian prisoners. A Battalion patrol entered Altavilla at 2030 hours, taking 210 prisoners.

The next day Termini Imerse was occupied by the Battalion. The Commander of the Coast Defense Sector surrendered to the Bn CO. A Battalion of Italian Mountain Artillery surrendered to the 58th. The Battalion set up civil government in Trabia, Termini Imerse, and Caccamo. The old Five-Eight was really taking over. A total of 3060 prisoners had been captured, and three sea-coast towns taken without the support of infantry or tanks. For 24 hours the Fifty Eighth operated a Prisoner of War Camp on the hillside above Trabia that fairly teemed with milling Italians. Then the AMGOT and 30th Infantry Regiment took over.

On the 26th of July the Battalion marched out of Termini Imerse and up into the hills to Petralia, where 5th Armored Artillery Group was attached to II Corps. The second follow-up of the Battalion arrived in the area shortly before the first follow-up closed in, and once again the Battalion was consolidated. Remaining in this area until July 30th, the Battalion moved to an assembly area near Sperlinga. Here orders were received assigning the Battalion in support of the 179th Infantry of the 45th Division, which was moving on Mistretta. At 2145 the Battalion moved into position west of Mistretta, just forward of the infantry front lines.



From then until August 3rd, the Battalion remained in position near Mistretta. Blown bridges, which the rugged terrain made impossible to by-pass, prevented vehicles from moving on San Stefano, on the coast. On August 3rd, after reconnaissance established the move could be made, the Battalion moved at 2200 hours down from the hills, and up the coast in the vicinity of San Stefano, pulling into position at 0300 hours the morning of August 4th. The Battalion was now attached to the 3rd Infantry Division. The same afternoon the ammunition trailers had to be left out by the main road, and the guns had struggle enough grinding up over the rocky trail to get into position. No sooner was the position occupied than enemy artillery began pouring in. However defilade was excellent, and a mask in front of the Battalion position saved it from direct hits. But the Germans kept on trying, and the 58th sat it out and watched the bursts behind them. Some even went out to sea, and burst in the water of the Mediterranean. The shelling continued with the same effect throughout the 5th, and into the 6th. On the 5th, one man in "A" Btry, was killed by a time burst (the first man killed in the Battalion by enemy action) and one other wounded.

At noon on August 6th, the Battalion pulled back into the previous position. Here, A and B Batteries were alerted for an amphibious operation with the 2nd Battalion, 30th

Infantry Regiment. On the evening of August 7th, the two Batteries, with 4 guns each, loaded on landing craft in the vicinity of San Stefano. Two observers from Headquarters Battery were attached. The landing was made at 0345 hours on the morning of August 8th, in the vicinity of San Agata. Slight opposition was encountered, and the landing was a complete success. The remainder of the Battalion moved forward to join A and B Batteries, arriving in position near San Agata early in the morning of August 9th.

Throughout the night persistent enemy counter-battery fire fell in the area. Three men were wounded during the day, but no other damage was inflicted. On August 10th, a second amphibious operation was planned with the same Batteries and personnel participating in support of the 2nd Bn, 30th Infantry Regiment. At 0335 hours on the morning the landing was made near Brolo, Sicily. And on this day, the luck of the 58th ran out. There was no surprise this time, and the Germans were waiting on the shore. 20 mm fire greeted the landing parties before they reached shore and a battalion of German Infantry, anti-tank guns, and a half dozen Mark V1 and Mark 1V tanks resisted the landing. The quarter ton vehicles and ammunition trailers couldn't get off the beach, and had to be abandoned there. The first position occupied was just northwest of the town of Brolo. The mask in front of the Guns--trees--was



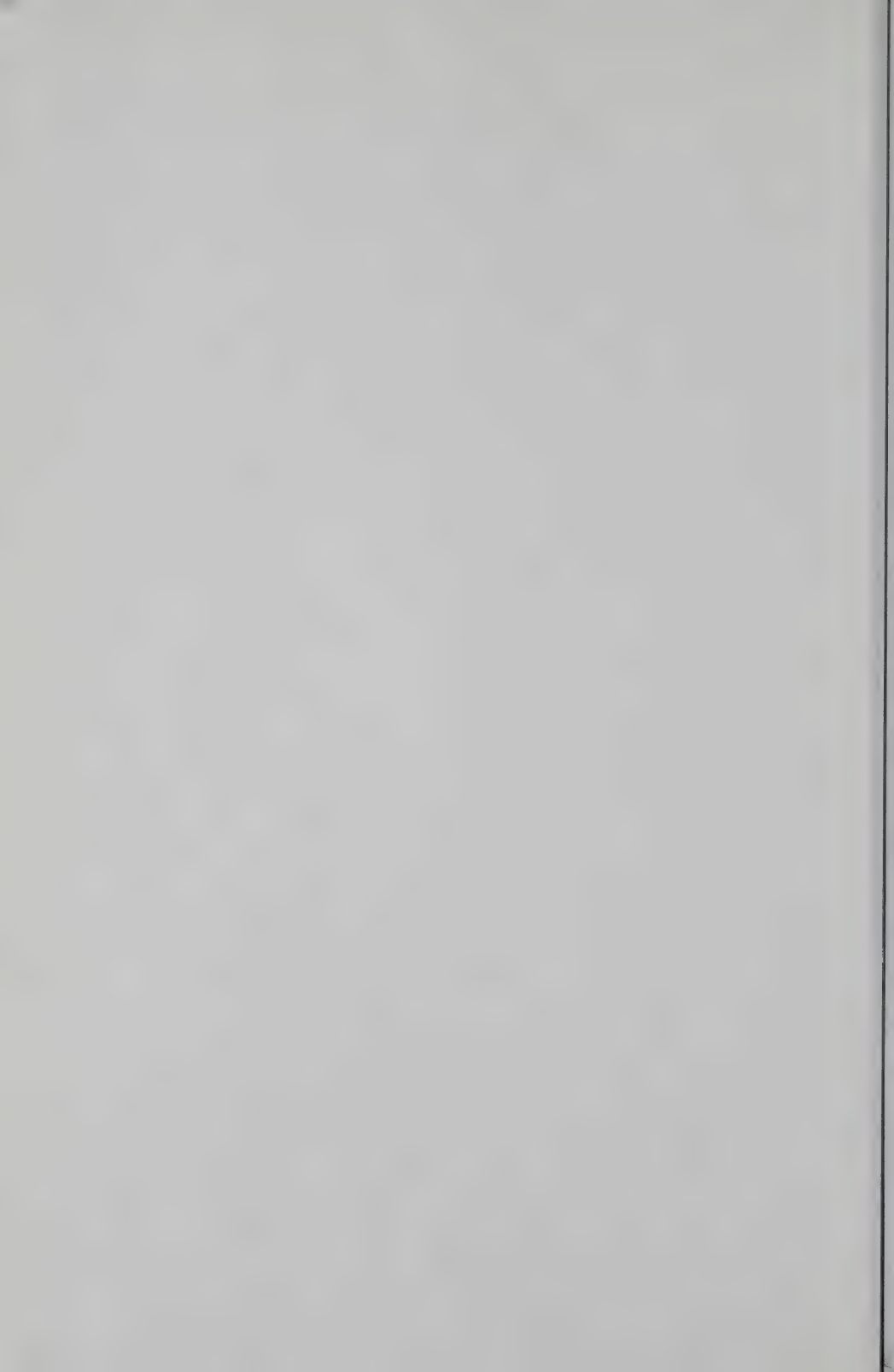
so close that only Charge 1 could be used in firing on the town. The guns were moved west to permit use of Charge 7. Enemy tanks on the road then destroyed two of A Battery's M-7's. And from then on the Germans threw everything but the well-known kitchen sink at the landing party. B Btry lost three M-7's-two by enemy fire, and one apparently through mistaken bombing by friendly planes. One M-7 from each Battery reached the main coastal road, and took up positions to fire on enemy tanks. Both were shortly destroyed by enemy fire. Enemy Artillery, mortar, and machine gun fire was now constantly sweeping the area. When all the M-7's were destroyed, the men joined the Infantry, which was taking a position on the hill across the road from the beach. The Battalion Executive officer Major STUART B. LAMKIN, was killed while firing a machine gun to cover the withdrawal up the hill of his men. 1st Lt. WILLIAM J. MURRAY, forward Observer, was also killed while attempting to direct fire. The Battery Commander of A Battery, Capt. RICHARD M. ROSSBACH, and his Executive, 1st Lt. MARTIN J. KEISER, were both captured. The total count of losses for the action revealed 9 killed, 14 captured, and 25 wounded. 7 out of the 8 M-7's taken on the landing were totally destroyed, and one half-track. On August 12th, Infantry moving up the coast broke through to the battered landing party, and the survi-

vors of the Battalion moved back to the position at San Agata.

Thus the war in Sicily, for the 58th, came to a close. The actual end of resistance on the island came a few days later, but for the Battalion it ended with Brolo.

The Battalion remained in bivouac in the lemon grove at San Agata until August 24th. The next move was made in the early morning hours, in the first real rainstorm encountered in Sicily. Throughout the entire series of Campaigns, it had become accepted tradition that the 58th never moves until it rains like hell. The new bivouac area was near Termini, Sicily, and was reached after some 10 hours driving down the coast. The war being over, temporarily, passes were in effect once more, to Palermo. Also, some enterprising soul found a mountain in the back yard which we could climb, just to keep in shape. The men swam in the blue waters of the Mediterranean--than which there is no bluer.

On September 10th, the Battalion moved back through Palermo to a bivouac area between Trabia and Termini Imerse, the towns the 58th had liberated during the campaigns, and therefore more or less considered "their towns". The Battalion pulled into the area with instructions not to unpack too much, as it was not anticipated they would remain long. Loading and personnel lists were there prepared, and it looked as though the 58th was Italy bound. However, on the 15th of September orders



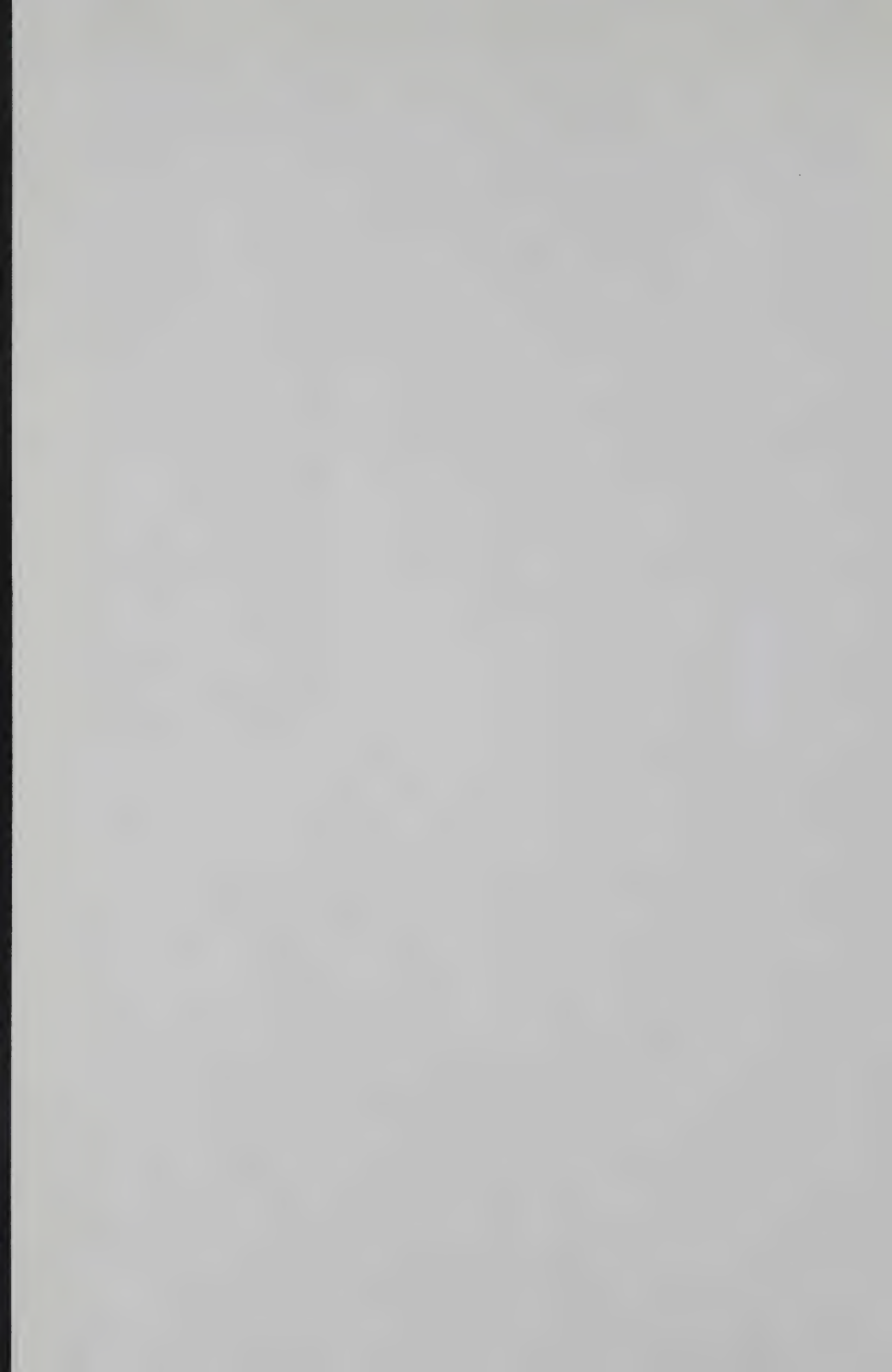
were received relieving the Battalion from attachment to the 7th Army and from assignment to the 5th Army. So, until November 14th the 58th remained in bivouac in the olive grove overlooking the Mediterranean. Passes continued to Palermo, the city with the blasted waterfront. A pass in Palermo consisted chiefly of roaming the streets in search of Vino, and being accosted by numerous greasy individuals who yelled "Spaghetti Joe?" "Chicken Joe?" at you. To prevent the Battalion from succumbing to the lassitude of late Sicilian summer, a convenient mountain was selected, and scampered up; and calisthenics were taken every morning, during which the 2nd Lieutenants took turns trying to wear out the Battery.

General GEORGE S. PATTON, JR., visited the area of Fifth Group and reviewed the troops and presented individual awards won during the Sicilian Campaign. Silver star awards were presented to members of the 58th.

On 12 November the Battalion turned in all vehicles, and on the 14th moved to a staging area at Mondello Beach, 6 miles west of Palermo. Here, at another Ceremony General PATTON presented two DSC's and 5 Legion of Merit awards to the 58th. On November 17th the Battalion moved to the docks at Palermo and loaded on the British transport HMS Aorangi. On the morning of the 18th the Aorangi

pulled out from the harbor of Palermo, England bound.

This was another prolonged voyage. The ship docked at Oran, North Africa on November 22nd, and remained there 5 days. It was discovered long after the Battalion had arrived in England that President Roosevelt had timed his visit to Oran to coincide with that of the 58th. Unfortunately he was unable to get together with us. From Oran the Aorangi moved to Gibraltar, the celebrated Bastion of England and the Prudential Insurance Company. Two days were spent anchored off Gibraltar, then on to the British Isles. Though the trip was quiet, it was generally known that a German "Submarine Pack" was on the prowl off the coast of Ireland at this time. Radio reports confirmed 3 subs sunk one day and 6 another by allied planes and destroyers. The Battalion spent Thanksgiving Day aboard His Majesty's Transport Aorangi, and actually had turkey at a delayed Thanksgiving Dinner. Also They had all the tea they could drink, and all the steamed fish they could eat--and a little they couldn't eat. There was also a special Mess for NCO's of the first three grades, an institution which strained old friendships to the breaking point. However, all's well that ends well--the Aorangi didn't sink, as was frequently predicted during the voyage, and the Battalion landed at Glasgow in good condition on December 9th. Debarking at night, the Battalion filed through the



long station, where they were welcomed to the British Isles by Red Cross girls with coffee and doughnuts.

From Glasgow the 58th entrained for England. Thus began the most delightful period of the 58th's stay overseas. The Battalion was billeted at Adderbury House, in Nissen Huts. Not exactly all the comforts of home, but after sleeping in the open for a year it was strictly up-town. It was grand to be among English-speaking white people again, and the people of Adderbury accepted us with smiles and cheer. They permitted us to blast the quiet, neighborly atmosphere of their Pubs, standing aside with quizzical smiles as the G.I.'s rushed the bar.

Christmas 1943, in England, was vastly different from Christmas, 1942 in Casablanca. Although celebration and feasting was curtailed in war-time England, the people invited us into their homes, and the real Christmas spirit was there. There was also a limited ration of Scotch at the Pubs, but of course that's neither here nor there. The men of the Battalion gave a Christmas Party for the children of Adderbury, contributing sweets from their rations, and from packages from home. Sgt. John R. Jackson presided as Santa Claus, and looked more like Santa, than Santa. Each Battery had it's own dances, at which there was always a goodly attendance of the local belles. A number of strong romantic attachments were developed, and for long after, the Battalion mail call from

England ran a close second to the one from home. The Battalion operations sergeant almost had to be dragged out of Adderbury in chains when we left, and he still swears he's going back and marry the gal.

As mentioned before, our stay in Adderbury was swell. However, into every life, a little rain must fall, and on February 28, the Battalion moved to Ivybridge to join the 29th Infantry Division. On March 2nd, elements of the Battalion moved to Camp D-10, in the vicinity of Dorchester, to participate in Problem "Fox", with the 116th Combat Team of the 29th Infantry Division. From Camp D-10, a cold wind-swept stretch of woods overlooking Portland Harbor, the Combat Team moved to the Portland Docks on March 9th, loaded on LCT's, and sailed on the afternoon of March 10th. At 0800 hours, the morning of March 11th, Exercise Fox began with the Battalion firing 105's from the LCT's, just prior to the landing of Infantry on Slapton Sands. The Guns unloaded on the beach from LCT's at 1300 hours and took up positions inland. The Battalion returned to Ivybridge at the conclusion of the problem, arriving early on the morning of March 13th.

The Twenty-Ninth Division now conducted an inspection of the Battalion, and General GERHARDT, GG of the 29th, addressed the men, welcoming them to the 29th.

On March 18th, the Battalion moved to Braunton for training at the Assault Training Center. This par-



ticular course lasted until March 30th. Firing the M-7's from landing craft was practiced, and the Battalion made stout attempts to condition themselves on obstacle courses and cross-country marches. The obstacle course consisted of crawling under barbed wire, swinging hand-over-hand over wired pits, climbing cargo net, etc. This was intended to harden the personnel for the rigors of the invasion. The way the invasion turned out, more time should have been spent on swimming instruction and control of the bowels-but that is getting a bit ahead of things. The return trip to Ivy-bridge was made on March 30th, and a period of Service practice for the guns began. On or about April, 16th Headquarters Battery represented the Battalion in the 4 mile speed march, sponsored by the 29th. The march called for a full-field march in 45 minutes. The majority of the Battery successfully completed it, but took days to recover fully.

On April 20th, the Battalion again moved to the D-Camps at Dorchester, in preparation for another problem. There was some question in the minds of the men as to whether or not it was to be a problem or the real thing; but it turned out to be Problem "Fabius", a landing similiar to the Problem "Fox". The 116th Combat Team had now been attached to the 1st Infantry Division for the invasion only. On the night of April 24th, enemy planes, attacking the docks at Portland, dropped bombs, in the D Camp areas, and bracketed one row

of tents occupied by 58th personnel. Two men from Battery A were wounded, and a couple of tents flattened. On May 1st, the Battalion loaded on LCT's in Weymouth harbor, and on the morning of May 4th, landed on the beach at Strete. At the conclusion of the problem on May 6th, the Battalion departed for Bournemouth.

The week's stay at Bournemouth, was very pleasant. The Battalion was quartered in buildings with real live bath-tubs in them, of which good advantage was taken. It was also a week of Springtime, and the sun outdid itself for us. For a while, it was almost possible to overlook the cloud of invasion hanging over us.

On May 15th, the Battalion departed from Bournemouth, less rear echelon, for the D-Camps once more. For the next few days, at Camp D-9, the 58th waterproofed equipment, gas-masks, personal arms, etc. One of the outstanding features of the D-Camps was the amount of pork fed us. Pork chops, roast pork. The chow was good, and there was plenty of it. We shook off that "Condemned men ate a hearty breakfast" feeling, and filled up. On May 29th, the men were briefed on the coming operation, and acquainted with the plans for landing on the coast of France. On June 1st, the Battalion split up, going to several different D-Camps. The Reconnaissance parties, together with the Battalion CO's party, were to land with the Infantry, and the remainder of the assault wave was

scheduled to land on a progressive time schedule.

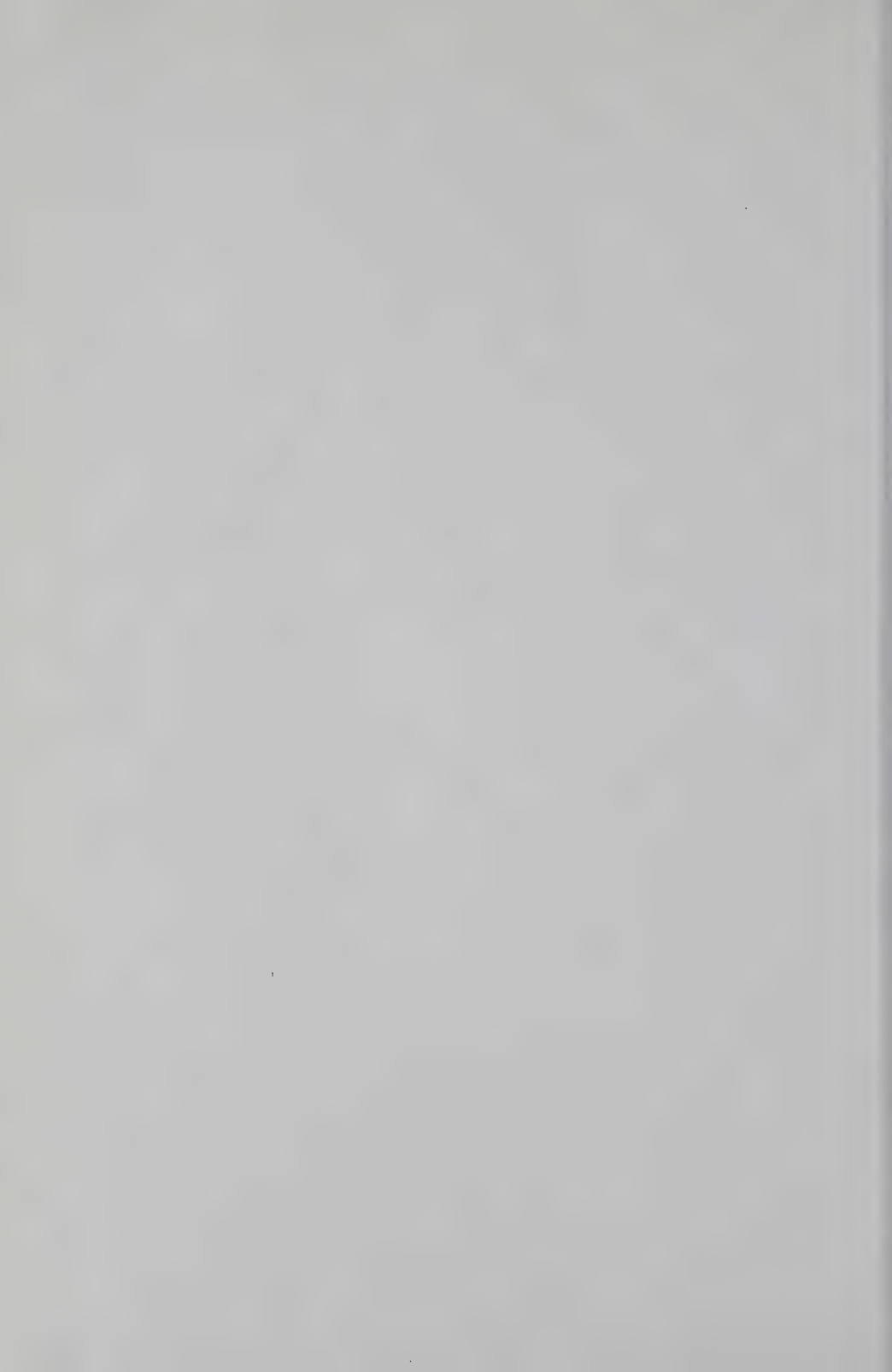
Loading on the invasion ships began on June 1st. The foot parties who were to go in first, loaded on transports. The guns, and a large portion of the Battalion personnel would disembark from LCT's, and a few from LST's. We waited patiently in the harbor until June 4th, when the invasion fleet set sail. However, a few hours out, the fleet turned back to Portland harbor, as the invasion had been postponed 24 hours. In the early hours of June 5th, the invasion Armada got under way once more, sailed out into the Channel, and in almost parade ground formation started for the coast of France. As far as the eye could see, stretched the ranks of LST's, LCT's, and APA's (Troop-ships).

H-Hour was at 0630 hours, June 6th, and at that hour, under a cloudy sky, and in a rough surf, the first waves of the 116th Combat Team began unloading on Omaha Beach, near Vierville-sur-Mer, Normandy, France. One Observer, 1st Lt. CARL M. JOHNSTONE, and party landed with the 5th Rangers at H-Hour, and attacked the cliffs at Point du Hoc. 3 other foot parties with the 5th Ranger Battalion, under 1st Lt. ARTHUR ROSENBAUM, and 2nd Lt. MICHAEL L. RONEY, and 2nd Lt. HENRY SHADDOCK, approximately H-40 minutes, and the remainder of the foot parties landed at about the same time. The balance of the foot-parties con-

sisted of the CO's Party, Liaison under Capt. ALFRED B. FISHER, Reconnaissance parties under 1st Lt. LEWIS E. DEMELLIER, 1st Lt. Harry F. RUSSO, 1st Lt. SAMUEL R. KERR, and an FO Party under 1st Lt. HARRY F. GRANE.

Omaha Beach will become, unquestionably, another glorious page in American History, but on the morning of June 6, 1944, it was a cold, wet, shell-splattered hell; and it will be forever etched in the memory of the men of the 58th who participated in that landing. The beach and defenses beyond the beach had been thoroughly bombed, and shelled both by warships and guns on the landing craft. But as the small landing craft grounded and their ramps went down, a murderous crossfire from well-emplaced machine gun nests cut them down. Mortars and artillery fire crashed along the water's edge, and men died in the water and they died on the shore; and all that long day, Death walked the beach at Vierville-sur-Mer.

Machine gun fire cut down the Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. McQUADE, as he struggled toward shore through waist-deep water. Lt. RUSSO was killed on the beach, after assisting his badly wounded Sgt. T/Sgt. Mason, to shore. Lt. GRANE was badly wounded in the face, and two members of his party, Pvt. Joslin and Pvt. Jordet were killed. Only one man out of this party walked off the Beach.



The first waves being pinned to the beach by the withering enemy fire, the guns of the Battalion were unable to debark on schedule, but as the Infantry gradually re-organized, and worked painfully and slowly off the Beach, the LCT's carrying the M-7's of the 58th, came in the shore through the incessant mortar, 88mm, and sniper fire. Some of the craft ran afoul of the mines at the water's edge, and one LCT sank with all guns.

But by 1830 hours, the Battalion had 11 of its guns on shore and ready to fire, and under the able and courageous direction of the Executive Officer, Major WALTER J. PATON, moved up off the beach in close support of the Infantry. Looking back, it seems a miracle that any of the guns ever got ashore. 2 Officers and 7 EM had been killed, 3 Officers and 14 EM wounded and evacuated, and 1 Officer and 9 EM were missing, as a result of the landing. Five M-7's and four Half-tracks were lost at sea, and 1 half-track destroyed on the beach by a mine. Personnel were scattered up and down more than a mile of beach, wet, shivering, and slightly bewildered. The beach was littered with wreckage and the still, twisted forms of men who had gone as far into France as they were ever going to go. And while at home the radio, announced "operations are proceeding according to plan", and thousands sat in Soldier's Field and prayed in the afternoon sun, darkness settled on the bloody beach at Veirville-sur-Mer.

Nightfall saw the German night-raiders come out, to be greeted by a surprising display of Ack-Ack from the beach. Bombs were dropped along the beach, and in the bay, but with little damage. Sniper activity continued throughout the night, but the shelling of the beach had died down. The Navy did some excellent work on beach defenses and gun emplacements beyond the beach. The next day, D-1, continued the reorganization of the Battalion, while close support to the infantry, (175th & 116th and the 5th & 2nd Rangers) was maintained at the same time. During the first hectic hours of the landing, the 58th provided the only effective artillery support on this stretch of the beachhead, and for the first few days, our FO's and Liaison provided the only communication for Forward elements of the Infantry and Rangers. The Battalion's FO party on Point due Hoe were isolated by the enemy for 2½ days, before the encircled Rangers were relieved by infantry and tanks of our forces. On D-Day, this same Party, unable to get communication with the Battalion had fired guns of the Navy on inland targets.

The sky was clear on D-1, and our planes patrolled the skies. German air power was very conspicuous by its absence. On the ground, the 58th moved up to a position in the vicinity of St. Laurent sur Mer, supporting the 175th Infantry. Sniping was bad now. The terrain inland off the beach was ideal for this kind of

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warfare, and snipers hung from the trees, from the chimneys of buildings, and picked off our cautiously advancing troops. In the evening the Battalion moved up North of Vierville Sur Mer.

On June 8th, the Battalion moved again, to the vicinity of Neux Jumeaux. On the 9th, the battalion reverted to full support of the 116th Infantry and 5th Rangers, and General support of the 175th Infantry. Two replacements of M-7's were received, and a move was made to a new position at Le Carref-Got, moving on the following day northeast of Lison. The fighting was now entering the hedgerow country of Normandy, excellent for defensive fighting, and the Germans were making the most of it. The Battalion was giving close support to the Infantry, and was often only 1000 or 1500 yards behind the front lines.

The mission was changed to general support of the 115th Infantry, and on June 12th, back they went in support of the 175th. On June 14th, the Battalion was relieved of attachment to the 29th Infantry Division, and attached to the 30th Infantry Division, in direct support of the 117th Infantry Division, who were just about ready to get their first taste of actual combat.

June 16th, the Battalion moved to a new position in the vicinity of St. Martin. When the position was occupied, enemy small arms fire was sweeping the area. The following day,

enemy artillery fire fell in A Battery's area, wounding the Battery Commander, Captain RALPH E. STONE, and several enlisted men.

A slight change was made in position on June 22nd, moving back about ten hundred yards, and this position remained in, until July 3rd, when the Battalion, now attached to 3rd Armored Division, moved to positions near La Madeleine. At noon, on July 4th, the Battalion, in conjunction with all other artillery on the front, fired one round in salute.

The night of July 7th, the Battalion moved again, arriving in position near Aire. This was another hot spot when the Battalion first occupied it, small arms and mortars kicking up quite a fuss the first night. On July 10th, the Battalion moved near Cavigny, pulling into position shortly after mid-night. It was fairly quiet when the position was first occupied, but shortly afterwards, it sounded like all the German artillery in that part of the country cut loose. The Battalion seemed to be about half-way between the Artillery and their target. In the morning a young battle developed off to the left flank, and tanks in front threw a few rounds screaming over, but no casualties were sustained. The Battalion was now supporting fires of the 391st FA Battalion.

A position was occupied at Le Desert on July 19th, with the Battalion attached to CC"A", 3rd

Armored Division. Here they remained, doing little firing until the break-thru at St. Lo.

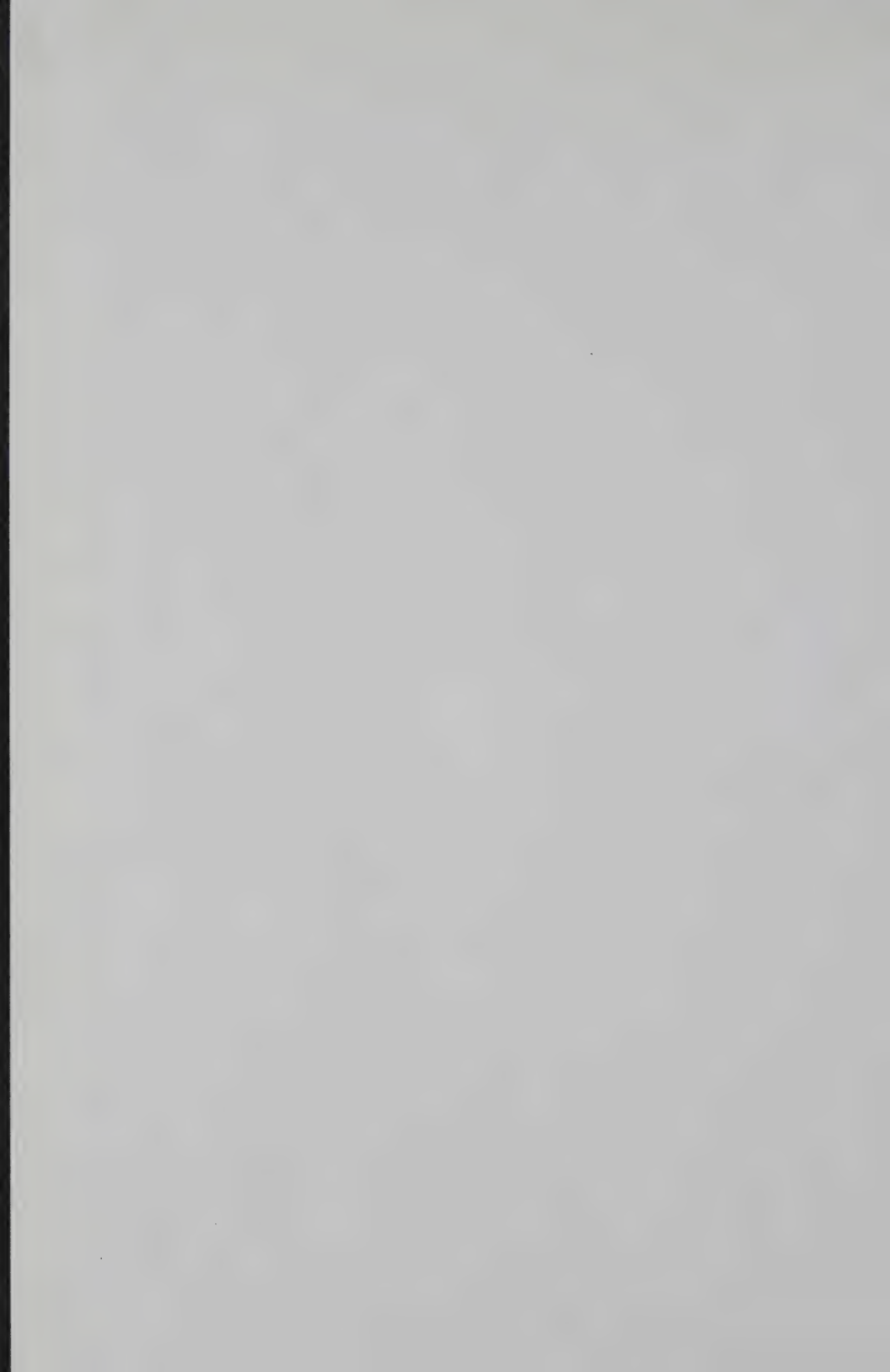
Plans had been perfected to smash the defenses at St. Lo., and then to break out of Normandy with an armored drive. The Battalion was still attached to the 3rd Armored Division, and waited in position at Le Desert, not far from St. Jean de Daye, for the H-Hour of the big push, which was to be preceded by a heavy aerial bombardment. At about 0930, hours, on the morning of July 25th, the fighters showed up. P-47's swarmed all over the sky-then came the Lightnings-diving and strafing the German Ack-Ack defenses; Then the big boys came parading in, first the liberators then the Forts. The bombs could be seen falling like pepper from a giant shaker-and then the ground started to shake. It didn't stop shaking for an hour-and-a-half. Ack-Ack was intense at first, and two Liberators went down in flames. But the saturation of bombs eventually smothered all Ack-Ack. After the forts came the Medium Bombers, and then the artillery cut loose. Somewhere along about 1100 hours that morning, the town of St. Lo ceased to exist.

Early in the morning of July 27th, the Battalion took off, less C Battery, which had been attached to Task Force "Y". The Battalion arrived in position at Le Mesnil—Aprey, where heavy enemy shelling was encountered by B Battery. In the early morning hours of July 28 th, enemy planes

bombed the area, injuring four men and damaging 3 half-tracks and a trailer. The Battalion moved again in the evening, and enemy planes again bombed the position, but inflicted no casualties or damage. Travel on the roads was becoming increasingly difficult, as the constantly moving columns jammed the roads day and night. As a result, the Battalion was spending much of its time sitting on the road. Enemy planes were hard at work during the hours of darkness.

The next position occupied, early in the evening of July 29th, was west of Cerisy-la-Salle, at which point C Battery joined the Battalion once more. The Battalion, now in general support of the 3rd Armored Division, moved to St. Denie le Gast, on July 30th. The carnage along the roads was becoming terrific. The mixture of wrecked vehicles, dead Germans and dead horses lined the roads. The Battalion moved again on July 31st, and made halts along the road to permit supported troops to pass. That night the Luftwaffe really got in and pitched. Virtually all their activity was at night now, and while their effectiveness was limited, they made things very unpleasant at times. Their routine was usually the same, as illustrated when the planes began milling around overhead. This continued for several minutes, then the Squadron Leader, or whoever he is, says "This must be about the place, Hans".

So Hans proceeds to kick out about a half-dozen or so flares, trans-



forming night into day. They hang there, very prettily, drifting slowly to earth, with several thousand GI's cursing them every inch of the way. Just as they are about down, the overhead swarming seems to straighten out, and down they come for the bombing run. This particular night must have been variety night on the Luftwaffe program, because one plane dropped H. E. bombs, another spilled incendiaries, and another must have had a lad in the rear dumping out small bombs in a basket. No one had any holes that night, as the Battalion had just pulled off the road. The area was pretty liberally plastered, Service Btry, a ways in back of the Battalion, getting its share of the treatment. 1 officer and 2 enlisted men were injured.

On August 1st, the Battalion made two moves, going into position North of Fouche in the evening, and on August 2nd moved up to Brecey. The following day the Battalion departed for a position at Juvigny Le Terte, but was held up on the road by anti-tank fire. The anti-tank gun was neutralized, and move completed to Juvigny. The Battalion remained at Juvigny until August 5th, firing intermittently, and receiving slight counter-battery fire in A Battery's area, injuring several EM. From Juvigny on the 5th a move was made to Ste Marie du Bois, and from there to La Huvrie on the 6th. La Muzangeres was reached on August 7th. During this march a 6×6 gas truck was destroyed by anti-tank fire

on the road. The gas section had regassed the Battalion the day before and had to return to the gas dump many miles to the rear. After reloading they started out after the Battalion. The enemy had cut the road behind us but the gas section didn't know this. So along in the afternoon here comes several 6×6's tooling merrily along the road when Bam ! the leading 6×6 went up in flames. The driver and assistant driver should have been cross-country runners judging from their stories of how they left the area.

On August 8th Battalion was attached to Combat Command "B" and attached to the 30th Infantry Division. The Battalion then moved back to a position in the vicinity of Juvigny Le Terte, where it remained, firing, until August 13th. During this period there was quite a bit of counter-battery fire throughout the area, but very little fell on the Battery positions. Enemy planes were again very active, the more or less stabilized positions giving them opportunity to locate targets. On the night of August 12th, the area was bombed for 20 minutes, one bomb landing directly in B Battery's position, causing no casualties, but disrupting communications. Immediately thereafter an enemy artillery barrage came into the area, some falling in the CP area, but causing no casualties.

August 13th the Battalion was given a break, and moved to a bivouac area near St Mars de la

Futaie for ordnance maintenance. This was the first break of the campaign for the 58th. The bivouac area was on the edge of a small lake; weather during the week stay there was ideal, and good advantage was taken of the opportunity to swim, bathe, and rest. Red Cross club-mobiles visited the area, with doughnuts, entertainment and coffee. And those members of the Battalion of lower moral caliber also partook of certain amounts of Calvados, a particularly vicious native liquor.

On the morning of August 21st, in a veritable cloud-burst, the Battalion went off to the wars again, in General support of the 3rd Armored Division. That night was spent in an assembly area after traveling 67 miles. The Battalion moved with the column again the next afternoon, and after a night march arrived in another assembly area North of Courville, after traveling 92 miles. The evening of the 24th another move was made, and another night march ended up 60 miles later near Nuguerig—this time in position.

Back in the push again, the Battalion moved rapidly to Corbeil. The people were becoming increasingly glad to see the Americans as they pushed inland, and flowers and fruits in season were being cast into the vehicles as they rolled along. When the Battalion passed through Corbeil, tomatoes were in season. The Battalion moved across the muddy Seine about 25 miles below Paris on the 27th, and moved on to Villeneuve

St. Denis. Another move was made the same day up to Monteaux. When the column started moving the next morning, the forward elements met resistance, and one Battery was placed in position to fire if needed, near Chambardy. The resistance was overcome, and the Battalion moved on. The Marne River was crossed this day at La Ferte. The column was now passing through country familiar in American History—the Argonne, the Marne, past Chateau Thierry, through Belleau wood. In the space of 24 hours, the column rumbled past wheat fields and patches of woods where in 1917 and 1918 troops had slogged and crawled forward foot by foot. Occasional cemeteries containing the orderly rows of grey, weatherbeaten crosses of another war were passed, and in several towns and villages were the monuments raised to commemorate the American and British dead of 27 years past.

Braisne was reached early in the morning of August 29th. Here a long train of German supplies was caught and shelled. Tanks were left on the flat cars by fleeing German troops, as well as a nice load of perfume. From Braisne a short move was made north to Brenelle, and on the 30th the Battalion moved with the column to a position near Pancy, crossing the Aisne River at Bourg. Another short move was made, and the Battalion went into position late at night just north of Thierny. On the road again the following day.

resistance was encountered, and the Battalion went into position Southwest of Herbigny. Later that night a move was made a short distance to Rocquigny.

The night of September 1st, at the position near Hirson, the Battalion witnessed its first flying bombs in flight. Quite a number of them came grinding over, and until they were finally identified they created quite a stir. They were apparently being launched from not too far away, as the "tail lights" could be seen rising in the distance.

On September 1st the column moved north to a position northwest of Mt. St. Jean, and moved again the same day into position on the edge of the Bois d'Eparry, south of Hirson. The Battalion moved early in the morning of September 2nd, and at 2210 hours, crossed the Belgian border. The first position occupied in Belgium was south of Harverg, at 0100 hours the morning of September 3rd. Soon after the Battalion had gone into position an enemy tank followed by infantry, apparently attempting to get back to German territory, appeared out of nowhere and drove right through the middle of the Battalion position. A great deal of confusion resulted, but the tank was shortly knocked out and the infantrymen killed or captured. This position was directly south of Mons, in the area of the onesided battle of Mons, in which German infantry and armor had been cut to pieces by our planes and

advancing ground forces, and isolated German units were wandering over the countryside at a loss as to where to go, or what to do. Early in the morning of September 3rd, a tank battle developed about 300 yards west of the Battalion CP, and 2 German tanks were destroyed in the engagement.

The Battalion was now detached from the 3rd Armored Division Reserve, and attached to the 391st Groupment and Combat Command "B". The Battalion moved with CC"B" column on the morning of September 4th, 42 miles, through Charleroi to a position at Floreffe near the Sambre River. This march through Charleroi is memorable because of the hysterical crowds that lined the roads for approximately 25 miles, cheering and pelting the passing vehicles with blossoms, fruit, bottles of beer. Passing thru the city of Charleroi itself the column had difficulty negotiating through the packed throngs, and a halt almost meant disaster. A halted vehicle was immediately mobbed, and the occupants hugged and kissed. Going through Charleroi the 58th looked more like a Tournament of Roses parade than a fighting unit on its way to battle. American and English flags appeared from nowhere, and fluttered from every building, along with the black, gold, and red of the Belgian colors. American flags with all the way from 13 to 48 stars were seen, and red, white, and blue banners with the image of President Wilson —

obviously holdovers from World War 1. Cries of "Vive les Libérateurs", a bas la Boches and "Allemand-Kaput" rent the air. The BFI was very much in evidence, some of them sporting a sort of linen beach suit uniform, with black tams. They buzzed gallantly around the towns, armed to the teeth, piled on automobiles of questionable mechanical performance, much to the delight of the Homefolk. They were engaged in rounding up collaborationists and other questionable characters, and patrolling the side-roads. They made it very difficult for the scattered German troops to hide out successfully for very long.

At Floeffe, early on the morning of September 5th, enemy mortar and artillery fire began falling in the Battalion area. Observers spotted enemy installations across the valley, and direct fire from 105's MG's and the attached AAA guns was brought to bear on them, forcing them to retire across the ridge. 10 casualties were suffered by the Battalion, 3 of them evacuated. The Battalion then moved to Wepion near the Meuse River, and remained in position over night.

The following morning, September 6th, the Battalion passed through more cheering throngs in Namur, crossed the Meuse River with the Combat Command, with the mission of supporting the crossing of the 9th Infantry Division troops further down the river. The guns went in position off the road at one point when an enemy column was observed, but

effective fire could not be brought on it. Enemy infantry was fired on from a position in a field near the river crossing of the 9th Infantry. Charge 1 was being used, and from a position behind the guns the projectiles could be seen in flight, arching into the sky like a hard-hit fly ball headed for deep field. Moving with the column in the evening, th Battalion traveled down a narrow gorge, darker than the inside of a black cat, and finally coiled into an area on the Meuse River near Dinant. Prisoners were brought in the next morning, herded in by an Ack-Ack half-track, which struck a mine while passing through the Battalion position, injuring two of the crew. The column moved shortly thereafter, and halted on the road at Dorrine, while C Battery fired on enemy infantry. The Battalion then moved on to Sovet, where it coiled to repair vehicles, moving again in the late afternoon to join 3rd Armored Division, near Leige, and coiled for the night near Sery. On the morning of the 8th Battalion moved to an assembly area with combat Command "B" at Tillf. In the afternoon another move was made to a position northwest of Magnee, and southeast of Liege. The huge slag mountains from the smelters of Liege could now be seen, each with the colors of Belgium flying from its peak. The bright spots of color could be picked out far down in the valleys, where the flags had been hung from the housetops and windows.

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On the 9th the Battalion was on the road again. Word was received in the afternoon that the Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. WALTER J. PATON, had been wounded while adjusting fire on an enemy target, and that he had been evacuated. Major STARLING W. WOOD, JR., then assumed command of the Battalion. "C" Battery went into position Southwest of Bannage, and our planes could be observed steadily and relentlessly strafing enemy column northeast of the town. In the evening the Battalion went into position at Grand Place, and moved shortly thereafter to Forges Thury, where the column was held up by blown bridges in front of it.

The morning of September 10th the Battalion moved to a position southwest of Verviers and Heusy. The 58th was now detached from CC"B" and attached to CC"A", and a move was made to a position on the northern edge of Verviers, overlooking the town. Verviers was also very enthusiastic about the Americans, but from the hill above Verviers the black rolling hills of Germany could be seen, and it was questionable if the reception there would be quite as delirious.

The following day the Battalion moved to a position north of Andrimont, where the column stopped because of resistance at the head. The next position was Southeast of Clermont, and in the evening a move was made to a position northeast of Welkenraedt. Battery C led off with

Task Force "X" in the morning of September 12th, and the remainder of the Battalion followed, going into position near Raeren late that night, where it was rejoined by Battery "C". No move was made on the 13th, and the Battalion remained one whole day in the same position on German soil, a pill-box on the Siegfried line serving as the CP, one and one-half miles southwest of Kornelimunster, Germany. Another move was made in the evening, and a position occupied one mile north of Brand, Germany.

The vaunted Siegfried line had been breached, and our columns now moved through the dragon's teeth-but the Spearhead drive had come to a halt, not to be resumed for many months. The Battalion remained in position at Brand until September 21st, firing steadily, and receiving slight counter-battery fire. On September 17th one of the FO tanks was knocked out, and two men wounded thereby.

On September 21st, the Battalion moved to a position at Busback, Germany, the guns going into positions directly in back of the town. On September 24th the Commanding General of the 3rd Armored Division Major General MAURICE ROSE visited the Battalion and presented awards to individual members of the Battalion. The Battalion remained in position at Busbach, firing consistently on targets in Stolberg and surrounding area.

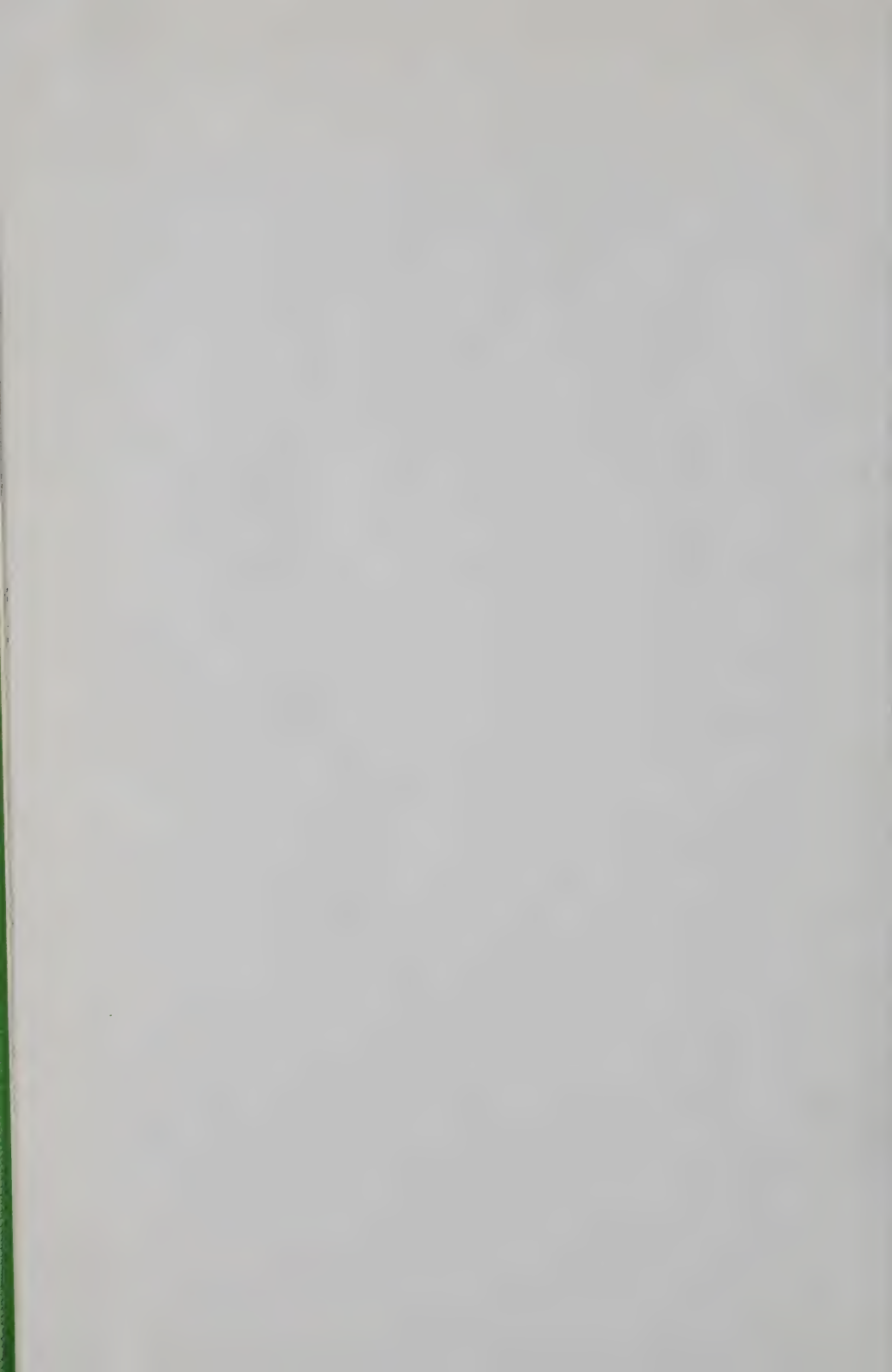
October 1st, the Battalion, now relieved of attachment to the 3rd Armored Division and attached to 1st Infantry Division, moved to a position $\frac{1}{2}$ mile east of Mores, Belgium, in support of 1106th Engineer Groupment for the attack on Aachen. On October 2nd, Lt. Col. MONT HUBBARD was attached to the 58th as Battalion Commander. The Battalion remained in position at Mores, firing only prepared concentrations in support of the 1st Infantry Division attack. On October 8th, the Battalion fired 20 rounds of propaganda leaflets into Aachen, and on October 20th 50 more rounds. There was no counter-battery fire in this position, only occasional distant bursts being heard. On October 12th, the 58th marked targets for dive-bombers in Aachen, using colored smoke. An enemy counter attack on October 13 was broken up by excellent combination of Infantry and our artillery.

During this operation at Mores, the Battalion had 1 forward Observer in Holland, 1 in Germany, one in Belgium, the firing batteries were in Belgium and Service Battery was in Germany. The Service Battery area, at Kornelimunster, Germany had 155 Howitzers in back of it. These guns attracted considerable attention from enemy artillery and planes, with the result that life in Service Battery was not particularly dull for a few nights. The rainy season was in full swing, and the first barrage to come over caught the battery with slit trenches full of water. A couple of nights

later Jerry air-raided the area five times in the one night, employing a unique technique of dropping his bomb first, then hanging out his flares and strafing. Service Battery soon moved over with the Battalion, but the Air Section stuck it out until a direct hit on a chicken coop in the back of the building in which they stayed gave them march order. At Mores Service Battery occupied a very large, rambling, and quite old castle. Among other things they unearthed and took into custody a German aeronautical engineer who claimed to have been one of the inventors of the Jet-rolled plane.

The dive bombers worked Aachen over steadily during this period, and a yellow cloud hung over the city for hours at a time, as the planes circled and dove continuously on the beleaguered city. Finally, on October 21st, we received word that the city had fallen, and on the following day, October 22nd, we were detached from 1st Division, and re-attached to 3rd Armored Division. Back went the 58th to its former position in Busbach. At this point a system was instituted whereby the Battalion was to be five days in direct support, and 5 days in reserve.

Here began a long stay in the Busbach position. The front lines had become stabilized, and no one appeared to be going anywhere very fast. The enemy artillery began intermittent harrassing fire throughout the area, and on October 27th five casualties resulted when shells fell in



A Btry. area. On the night of November 1st heavy caliber shells, probably 170 mm, were pumped in steadily for approximately 45 minutes—a total of about 150 rounds landing just over the Battalion position, presumably directed at the 155 guns in back of the Battalion. Basements and foxholes became extremely popular for a while, but no damage or casualties resulted in the Battalion. The rainy season had definitely set in now, and things were pretty sloppy.

Enemy air activity was more or less limited to the nights. The Luftwaffe did make an occasional appearance during daylight hours—when they could get “road clearance” from the AAF. The Battalion was fortunate in having attached to it a very excellent ACK-ACK outfit, the 486th, with multiple. 50 Caliber guns and 37mm's. These boys were with the Battalion all during its attachment to the 3rd Armored Division, and became more or less a part of it, instead of just an attachment. Their multiple. 50's supplied extremely effective fire-power, not only against planes, but also against ground troops, they were lovely to have along when Jerry got in too close.

On November 16th, preceded by a bombing by our planes, and prepared fires of our artillery, CC“B” pushed off in the attack to clear the way to Duren. Objectives were the towns of Scherpenseel, Hastenrath, and Werth. The attack immediately ran into difficulty, tanks bogged down, and this, coupled with stub-

born defenses, slowed the attack to a walk. Four of the Battalion's FO's, 2nd Lt. JOHN R. JACKSON, JR., 2nd Lt. CRAGIN, 2nd Lt. HIPPE, and 1st Lt. SHADDOCK, were wounded and evacuated; and all three of the Battalion's FO Tanks were knocked out of action. The objectives were reached, but only after a bitter struggle. On November 20th the Task Force supported by the Battalion was “pinched out” of the action by 1st Infantry Division and 104th Infantry Division troops coming up and closing in from the flanks. The 58th began hounding higher headquarters for replacement officers.

CC“B” was now placed in reserve, so the 58th was attached to CC“B”, in direct support of Task Force “X”. On November 26th the Battalion moved to the vicinity of Eschweiler to support the Task Force in the attack on Langawehe, but returned the next day to the old area at Busbach and placed on a two hour alert status. On November 30th Lt. Col. PATON returned to the Battalion from the hospital.

December 1st the Battalion moved to a position south of Heistem to reinforce fires of the 391st FA Bn. The attack was postponed 24 hours, and then called off. Where upon the Battalion returned to Busbach on December 3rd, to be again placed on a two-hour alert status.

On December 4th Lt. Col. HUBBARD was relieved of command, and Lt. Col. PATON re-assumed



command of the 58th Armored FA Battalion.

December 9th, the Battalion departed from Busbach and again took positions in vicinity of Heistern, general support of 391st FA Bn, to support Task Force KING of the 3rd Armored Division. This task force was to attack from Langerwehe in an attempt to secure the towns of Obergeich, Geich, and Echtz. Attack to be co-ordinated with attack of the 9th Infantry to secure the west bank of the Roer River near Duren. The Battalion was to place fire in front of the advancing tanks to prevent effective use of bazooka teams by the enemy, which had been proving very effective against our tanks of late. The prepared fires were laid down on the morning of December 10th, and the attack took place on schedule. Battalion continued to fire harrassing fires throughout the day. Attack went well, and Geich was reached on schedule. Echtz was taken the following day. Task Force King reached the river at several points, and Hoven and Mariaweiler taken. The Battalion fired on AT guns and groups of enemy infantry with good effect.

A smoke mission was fired across the Roer River the following day, only mission of the Battalion for the day. All objectives were secured, and the enemy had retreated across the river. On December 13th the Battalion moved back to the area at Busbach.

The evening of December 16th orders were received relieving the Battalion of attachment to Seventh Corps and attaching it to 28th Infantry Division and VIII Corps. The Battalion was to proceed to Wilty, Luxemburg, to reinforce fires of the 28th Division, which was being counter-attacked. It was rumored around the Battalion that they were "having a little trouble" — which is probably the most colossal understatement ever made.

During the night of the 16th enemy parachutists were dropped near the Battalion, but were rounded up and captured. The Battalion Commander departed on the morning of December 17th to contact the 28th Division Artillery Commander. Road clearance for the Battalion could not be obtained, so movement was postponed until 0200 hours on December 18th. Enemy plane activity was intense the night of December 17—18th, right from the start. The Brand-Busbach area was bombed during the early part of the night, and planes were overhead constantly all night. It was indeed a gala night for the Luftwaffe. The trip from Busbach the remainder of that night was more or less on the nightmare side, with Jerry hanging flares continuously, and dropping an occasional bomb. It made it easier to see the road, but made it hard as hell on the nerves. No casualties resulted, however. The Battalion passed through Verviers about 0800 hours on the morning of the 18th.

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As we approached our destination the weather became more overcast, and fog began closing in. Also there seemed to be a growing agitation among the civilians we passed on the road. When we passed through Houfalize the civilians were streaming out of town, carrying their belongings. What's more, they looked scared. The question began to arise: "what in hell is going on down here?". When the column passed through Bastogne people were milling around all over the place — and they were distinctly worried. Service Battery and Personnel Section remained in Bastogne while the Battalion moved on out of town, past units who were digging in alongside the road, and took up defensive positions near Longvilly, Belgium, near the Luxembourg border, to support fires of the 100th FA Bn. which was in direct support of the 110th Infantry Regiment, 28th Infantry Division.

At 2200 hours small groups of our infantry began infiltrating back through the Battalion position, with information that a strong enemy force was advancing down the Bastogne road. The Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. PATON, elected to remain in position and attempt to stop the enemy armor, and inflict as much damage as possible. Personnel of the Battalion were informed of the situation, and positions dug in and out-posts posted.

The Battalion organized four M-10 Tank Destroyers that were pulling back through the position, and toge-

ther with the Infantry, placed them in out-post positions. Throughout the night fire was directed on the main road crossing, where enemy troops were concentrated. In the early hours of the morning, heavy mortar fire began falling in the Battalion position. Two enemy half-tracks attempted to move up along the road toward "A" Battery's position, were taken under direct fire, and knocked out. A heavy fog made observation impossible; and soon heavy small arms fire began sweeping the area from the front and both flanks. The Infantry began to withdraw, and it soon became apparent that the 58th held the forward-most position in the sector. With improved visibility, two enemy tanks were located on the hill above the position, throwing direct fire into the Batteries. Taken under direct fire, by our guns, they were forced to withdraw. The Commander of Task Force "R" of the 9th Armored Division decided to move his forces back to Bastogne. With no infantry or tank support, the 58th was forced to withdraw also, to avoid over-running by the enemy. Near Mageret the head of the column ran into a road-block, and attempts to break through were unsuccessful. B Battery remained in position at Longvilly to cover the withdrawal of the column, and fired direct fire on enemy tanks throughout most of the morning. The other two Batteries went into position to fire on Mageret, but limited observation made effective fire difficult. The enemy continued to shell the road, and mor-

tar and machine gun fire swept most of the column on the road. Wrecked and burning vehicles jammed the road, and B" Battery was catching direct fire from enemy tanks, inflicting losses in vehicles, guns and personnel. Passage through Magaret being impossible, the column bypassed the town successfully, though enemy fire continued to fall on the road.

The Battalion had suffered casualties to the extent of two Officers, Capt. ANTHONY B. MONTANA and Lst Lt. ALFRED DEMELIER, killed, 29 Enlisted men killed or missing, and 58 wounded. 8 M-7's, 14 half-tracks, two M-4 FO Tanks, 2 1/2 Ton trucks, 1 1/4-Ton Ambulance, and 1 Wrecker and 10 1/2-Tons were destroyed by the enemy. The remainder of the Battalion went into position at a point just west of Bastogne in the afternoon, in support of the 101st Airborne Infantry Division. The delaying action fought by the Battalion that morning had enabled two Task Forces to take defensive positions behind them, and measurably slowed the enemy advance on Bastogne. A number of missions were fired by the remaining 8 guns of the Battalion, on the 20th, covering road-blocks held by the 101st. On one road block Bn. fire destroyed 9 enemy vehicles attempting to break through.

On the morning of December 21st, word was received that the enemy had broken through on the right flank. The Battalion moved to a

position near Tillet, to more effectively cover the road blocks, arriving in position at 1300 hours. Soon thereafter the position was surrounded, and all roads leading out of Tillet were cut. Two M-7's and an M-4 Tank, on reconnaissance to find a way out, were destroyed by fire from an enemy road block. The Battalion set up outposts and road blocks for the night. Shortly after midnight the Battalion received orders to attempt to return to Bastogne. A small force of friendly armor had been sent out to meet us. The Battalion moved out on the road in column, and after moving about 500 yards ran directly into an enemy column advancing down the road toward the Bn. position. The lead M-7 was knocked out, and the column engaged in a fire fight, receiving machine gun and mortar fire. The original position was resumed, and the remaining 5 M-7's brought fire on a strong enemy force moving up to attack in the morning. By 0930 hours on December 22nd all but one of the Battalion's M-7's had been destroyed, and the order was given to destroy all remaining equipment and infiltrate through the enemy lines on foot.

Thus, in a heavy snowstorm, which aided the withdrawal, the men of the 58th split into small groups and walked out of the encircled position on foot, leaving the remains of an Armored Field Artillery Battalion blazing in the snow. The men walked about 17 miles that day, before friendly units were



contacted. All who left the position had gotten through safely.

Service Battery had withdrawn from Bastogne on the morning of the 19th, and moved first to Berceauxm and then back to the small hamlet of Fontenoille on the 21st. Late at night on the 22nd, the first survivors of the Battalion reached Fontenoill, and the remainder continued to come in for the next few days. Some were taken back to Charleroi before locating the remainder of the Battalion.

Thus, the 58th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, less Armor and less Field Artillery, assembled at Fontenoille to lick its wounds, count its losses — and sweat out transfer to the Infantry.

The people of Fontenoille took the 58th to their homes, and for three weeks, it was just like being "one of the family". The heartwarming hospitality they exhibited, and the manner in which they took the rather battered 58th into their homes, overcame the barnyard stench that permeated each and every dwelling. The 58th will ever have a place in its heart for the Belgium people of Fontenoille. The Battalion operated road blocks during this period, as a precaution against further penetration. A small party of the Battalion that had gone into Bastogne, after the battle of Longvilly, returned to the Battalion on December 28th, after that city (Bastogne) was relieved.

The Battalion was attached to the 174th FA Group on December

24th, and on December 29th, was relieved of attachment of this group and attached to the 333rd Group. New equipment began to arrive on December 26th, and by the middle of January, though not fully equipped, it began to look more like a fighting unit, and an artillery unit. There was a relieved sigh all over the Battalion, and people quit worrying about things, like platoons, bayonet charges, and walking through Germany. On the morning of January 18th, the 58th rode off to the wars once more, leaving much sorrow in Fontenoille.

The first position reached was at Foy, Belgium. The Battalion was now attached to the 11th Armored Division tactically, reinforcing the fires of Division Artillery. This position was maintained through January 27th, with very little firing done after the first few days. On January 21st, a half-track was lost to an enemy mine, and the driver wounded and evacuated. The weather was bitter cold through this period, and it was rough going on the boys and the guns. On January 25th, the Battalion was relieved of attachment to 11th Armored Division and 174th FA Group, and on the 27th, was attached to 4th Infantry Division to reinforce fires of the 42nd FA Battalion, in direct support of the 12th Infantry. On January 28th, the Battalion moved to a position near Durler-Hof, Belgium, traveling 27 miles. The Battalion remained in position firing on January 29th.



On January 30th, march order was received again, and the Battalion moved to Brecht, Belgium, a short move this time. The Battalion remained here with little firing done until February 2nd. The cold, snow, and the swollen rivers were slowing the Infantry advance considerably. Three observers from the Battalion were operating with the 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry. On February 2nd, the Battalion once more made the entry into Germany. Visions were had of the 58th punching away making different holes in the Siegfried Line for the next six months. The first position occupied on this second pilgrimage to the home of the Harrenvolk was at Orb. Several harassing missions were fired throughout the night.

The Battalion moved to new positions south of Schonberg, Germany, on February 4th. Germany looked even worse the second time the Battalion entered it than it had the first time. The snows were just departing, the towns all looked dirty, and everywhere there was mud. And of course there had been a certain amount of shells and bombs tossed around. And it doesn't do any town a bit of good to have innumerable tanks milling around in the front yards. The Battalion moved into this position in support of the 4th Rcn. Troop, but was relieved shortly and placed in general support of the 4th Infantry Division, reinforcing the fires of the 29th, FA Battalion, in direct support of the 8th Infantry.

The Battalion moved again on February 6th to the vicinity of Hattenfield. In the afternoon a few rounds of mortar came bucketing into the forward area, and a concentration of 75mm fire, but no damage or casualties resulted. The Battalion remained in this position, waiting for the high ground to the east to be cleared. On the 9th, the Battalion moved to a position on the fringe of a woods near Waschied. The new area had not been cleared of mines, and one $\frac{1}{4}$ -Ton vehicle tripped over one. Both occupants of the vehicle were injured, and the driver was evacuated. The sector through here was very heavily mined, and precautions had to be taken in every area to prevent similar accidents.

The Battalion remained here in the woods through the remainder of the month of February, living in Pyramidal tents. On February 11th, General BLAKELY, presented individual awards to members of the command. The mission of the Division at this point was to clear all ground west of the Prum River, and to capture the town of Prum. On February 15th, the enemy dumped a large concentration of rocks on the east edge of the Battalion position, but no casualties or damage were sustained. Again on the 17th, a large concentration of light artillery fell just short of the Battery positions, and 10 rounds landed in C Battery's area.

Two preparations were fired on the morning of February 18th to

assist the 90th Division in their attack to the south. On the 20th, the Battalion fired on enemy Infantry, and reports from captured PW's indicated the results were excellent. One of the Battalion's Forward Observers, 1st Lt. Collins, was mortally wounded on February 23rd, while adjusting fire.

On February 27th, the Battalion fired preparation to support the 87th Infantry Division attack. On the morning of the 28th, the 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 8th Infantry Regiment, attacked across the Prum River. Heavy resistance was met, but objectives were taken but not completely secured. The advance of the Infantry continued on March 1st and 2nd, and the 70th Tank Battalion, accompanied by our observer, moved into Willerath on the 2nd. Battalion fired missions against enemy rockets adjustments of fire being made by Air O. P. The Tanks met more opposition on the 3rd, from antitank guns on the flanks, Battalion fired smoke missions, but high wind deprived these of effectiveness. The Battalion was detached from 402nd FA Group, and reattached to the 333rd Group, in general support of the 11th Armored Division, and ordered to displace in vicinity of Willerath. One Battery was displaced forward at once, and the remaining two supported the attack of the 4th Infantry Division. The complete Battalion closed in the new area near Willerath at noon on the 3rd of March.

On the morning of March 4th, the Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. PATON, while reconnoitering for a new position, was killed when a mine blew up the "Weasel" in which he was riding. He was the 2nd Battalion Commander of the 58th killed in action. 1st Lt. WILLIAM M. DONNELLY, Reconnaissance officer, and the driver were seriously injured, and both were evacuated. Major STARLING W. WOOD, JR., assumed command of the Battalion.

The 11th Armored Division had jumped off in the morning, and the Battalion supported the attack with several T. O. T.'s on heavily defended enemy positions. On the morning of March 5th, the Battalion moved to position in vicinity of Budesheim. The road was shelled quite heavily just as the end of the Battalion column was moving into Budesheim, but no damage or casualties resulted. On the 6th, the Battalion remained in position, supporting the crossing of the Kyll River with preparation and smoke missions.

The Battalion was relieved from attachment to the 333rd Group on the 7th, and attached to CCA of 11th Armored Division. Battalion moved to Hinterhausen, supporting another crossing of the Kyll River at Lessingen. The Battalion joined the column of CCA, and was off on an old time armored drive.

The 11th Armored Objective was Kelberg-Mayen, and the capture of

Andernach on the Rhine. It was definitely a "rat-race", until just short of Boxberg an anti-tank gun let part of the column thru, and then proceeded to knock out five vehicles in the middle of the column. East of Dreis Bonn, the Battalion went into position and fired harrassing fires throughout the night. The anti-tank gun was cleaned out by infantry.

The following morning, March 8th, the column started rolling again, moving through Boxberg, Kelberg, Boos, Mayen, Hausen, Ochtendung; and the Battalion went into position southwest of Plaidt at 0200 hours the morning of March 9th. During the march, many groups of PW's were observed going to the rear without guards. Everyone was just too occupied to bother with going through the formalities of taking them prisoner. It must be rather embarrassing to try to give yourself up, and find no takers.

The morning of March 9th our leading elements jumped off and were in Andernach by mid-afternoon. There was some fire from bazookas and small arms from across the river. Lt. HORVATH, one of our observers fired on anti-tank guns holding up our tanks, and successfully neutralized them. The Battalion remained in this position in the vicinity of Plaidt until March 15th. A few missions were fired against enemy infantry and tanks across the Rhine River. The weather had cleared considerably now, and our pla-

nes were busier than beavers all day long.

On March 15th the Battalion moved to another position at Mulheim. The Battalion fired in support of the 87th Infantry Division's crossing of the Moselle River. Battalion was now firing in reinforcement of 334th FA Bn, in direct support of 335th Infantry Regiment.

The night of March 16th, the Battalion moved, passing through Karlerhow, Bassenheim, Celtenton, Trim, Polgh, Kehrig, Dungenheim, Kaisersesch, and into position near Schmidt, arriving in position at 0730 hours the morning of March 17th. Late in the afternoon of March 17th, the Battalion "parti'd" again, traveling through Dreisch, Lutzerath, Kenngus, Bad Bertrick, Alf, and across the Moselle at Bullay. One Enlisted Man and one half-track were lost here, the half-track temporarily. Rifle fire through the windshield killed the driver. Just short of Kappel the Battalion went into position for the night, but did no firing.

The Battalion moved again the next morning, March 18th, past Eirchberg, and into position southeast of Dickensheid, remaining here throughout the night. In the morning the march was resumed, and a position occupied near Hainzenberg. This position was in an extremely peaceful-looking valley. The sun was shining, and the sky was as blue as any spring sky was ever blue. Everything was quiet, and the men were

standing around, more or less "batting the breeze". Then, with no warning, rockets began falling in the area. Approximately 30 rockets fell in a space of a few seconds. The majority of them landed on the hill slope at the edge of "B" Battery, but several landed directly in the Battery area. As near as anyone can estimate there were about 30 of them-though practically everyone lost count after the first round. Several of "B" Battery's men had been caught out in the open; 3 EM were killed, 3 "B" Battery Officers wounded and evacuated, and 8, EM wounded and evacuated. At no time in its history was the 58th hit so hard in such a short space of time. No more rockets came in after that one salvo.

Shortly before midnight on the 19th, the Battalion moved again, traveling all night. On the other side of Heinzenberg a small tank battle appeared to be going on to the right of the column, with a few tracers looping up toward the town. The Battalion crossed the Nahe River near Simmern, and went into position at 0515 hours, west of Meddersheim. At 0930 hours the Battalion was on the move again, moving south through Meisensheim, Callbach, Gangloff, Ransweiler, Schonborn, Katzenbach. Near Katzenbach while the column was passing an infantry bivouac area, firing broke out from a clump of woods off to the right. The place immediately became a bedlam of rifle and

machine gun fire, and shortly after a group of Germans were observed coming out of the woods in surrender. The Battalion went into temporary position near Katzenbach, moving out again late in the afternoon, passing through Marienthal, Dannengeis, Dreisen, and into positions at Albisheim. During the march, A Battery fired a direct fire mission against enemy entrenched in and around a building, with excellent effect. The weather was clear and warm now, and roads were becoming dusty again. In armored drives, the roads are swamps or dust-bowls, there seems to be no in between.

The town of Albisheim had just recently been worked over pretty thoroughly by artillery and planes. Buildings smoked and burned as the column rumbled through the debris-laden streets, and civilians still stood with that stunned look on their faces. German ack-ack guns poked their noses out of the wreckage. Apparently, they had run them right into the back yards of houses and set them up.

The afternoon of March 21st, the Battalion moved again, attached to the 183rd Group. The next position was near Hahnheim. Through here, there was increasing evidence of activity on the part of the German Chamber of Commerce. Buildings were plastered with signs, such as, "See Germany and Die", and "Onward, Slaves of Moscow". The following morning, the 58th rolled

on to Winterheim, where it was given the mission of supporting the 42nd Cavalry Squadron, holding defensive positions on the Rhine. A few observed missions were fired the morning of the 23rd, and a preparation was fired to support the crossing of the River by the 5th Infantry Division. In the afternoon of the 23rd, the Battalion moved to an assembly area, with orders to move from this point and cross the Rhine in the vicinity of Oppenheim.

The Battalion moved out of the assembly area shortly before midnight, moving slowly toward Oppenheim. The Luftwaffe was out over the Bridge, and were constantly strafing the bridge and approaches. As the Battalion crawled through Oppenheim, the Germans opened up with interdicting fire with 105's from across the river. The slow pace, the whistle and Whraaack!!! of shells, and the threat of strafing formed a combination a bit hard on the nerves. The lead vehicles pussy-footed up to the pontoon bridge about 0300 hours, and with one man walking in front of each vehicle, as a guide, crossed the historic Rhine. The map doesn't show it, but as this point, the Rhine is slightly wider than the English Channel-or it was that night, anyway. There was no strafing while the Battalion crossed, but the 105's kept it from being too dull.

On the east side of the Rhine, the Battalion went into position southeast of Geinsheim at 0630 hours. Enemy planes were overhead early in the

morning, but kept pretty well up. Battalion fired for 183rd Group and the 90th Infantry Division. Another move was made in the afternoon to Dornheim, where the Battalion remained for the night. The Luftwaffe was overhead again during the night, bombing and strafing, but no damage was sustained by the Battalion. The morning of the 25th, a move was made to Buttleborn. Here the mission of the 58th was changed to direct support of the 6th Armored Division, crossing the Rhine that day. There moves were made that afternoon, before the Battalion joined with the 86th RCN Bn. Then a move was made to a fourth assembly area. Two of the Battalion Observers were sent out with each of the RCN tank forces.

On the night of March 25th, shortly after dusk, enemy planes strung out an exceptionally heavy concentration of flares over the bridges near Oppenheim. There were at least 100 flares in the concentration, and the surrounding area was lit up for miles. Service Battery was approaching the bridge to cross at this time. A heavy bombing attack was anticipated on the bridges, but never materialized, and it was later learned that our night-fighters had intercepted the enemy bombers short of the target, and forced them to jettison their bomb loads. Smoke generators had been placed in operation now, and a heavy artificial fog covered the bridges and approaches day and night.

On the 26th of March the column moved out in the morning, protecting the right flank of the 6th Armored, and endeavoring to make contact with 4th Armored Division on the right. The column passed through Morfelden, Langen, Dudenhofen, Jugenheim, and through Heusentsamm. Resistance was met here from 88mm guns and 20mm guns just out of town. The 88mm was neutralized by fire adjusted by Air OP, and the column moved on, closing into an assembly area north of Neu Isenberg to wait completion of a bridge across the Main River at Frankfurt.

The Battalion remained in position until the afternoon of March 27th, when a new position was taken, where the Battalion reinforced the fires of the 11th Armored Division Artillery, and fired T.O.T.'s throughout the night. This firing continued on the morning of March 28th, and the Battalion was informed it was now reinforcing the fires of CCA, in direct support of Task Force Davall (confusing, isn't it?). In column with CCA in the afternoon, the Battalion was pulled off the road, and coiled around the bridge site on the Main River. This was a particularly hot spot to coil, inasmuch as enemy planes were attacking the bridge. Early in the morning of the 29th the Battalion moved to join 11th Armored Division, and crossed the Main River at 0910 hours, and then moving through Hanau. One Battery moved with the advance

elements of the column, and there was always one Battery in position during the march. The Battalion was not in direct support of Task Force Brady, in general support of CCA, and attached to the 183rd Group (Are there any questions?) The Battalion occupied positions near Langenselbold, as the Task Force had run into heavy opposition just short of Rothensbergen. The 58th lost 1 half-track and 1 EM wounded from one of the FO parties. There was also slight shelling in the Battalion area throughout the night.

The morning of March 30th the Battalion fired preparation for advance of Task Force just before the jump-off. Two towns were taken, but the advance was held up short of Glenhausen. The Battalion moved into position to fire all day at observed targets. Good results were obtained, three AT guns, two personnel carriers knocked out, and heavy personnel casualties inflicted on the enemy. The Battalion also fired a smoke preparation to enable our infantry to escape from AT and small arms fire which was pinning them down. The next morning the column was moving again, bypassing the resistance at Gelnhausen, and finally going into position in the evening at Kressenbach.

The speed with which the columns were moving now left pockets of enemy resistance to be cleaned up by the Infantry. Occasionally this by-passed resistance made it rough on the supply column coming up behind,

and the roads down which the spearheads advanced were frequently closed to supply trains by enemy action.

The Battalion moved again on April 1st, passing through Waliroth, Weideau, Hauswurz, Grossenlider, and Shlitz. The objective was Kranichfeld. A position was occupied shortly after midnight northeast of Frenkenheim. In the morning the march continued, passing through Honneberg. A defensive position was taken just short of the Werra River. Resistance was light, and very little artillery fire was called for. The morning of April 3rd the Battalion crossed the Werra River, and moved up towards Suhl, where small-arms and anti-tank fire was encountered, coming from the vicinity of the city. In the vicinity of Marisfeld, artillery and rocket fire fell on the Battalion, but no damage or casualties were sustained. Positions were occupied at Bischofrod, with one Battery forward to cover the northern approach to Suhl. The Battalion remained in position on the 4th, firing against enemy infantry. Suhl had been cleared, but well dug in enemy positions on the outer fringes of the town were offering resistance. The Battalion's fire inflicted severe casualties on the enemy infantry, and the high ground east of the town was cleared. The Battalion moved to a new position in the evening.

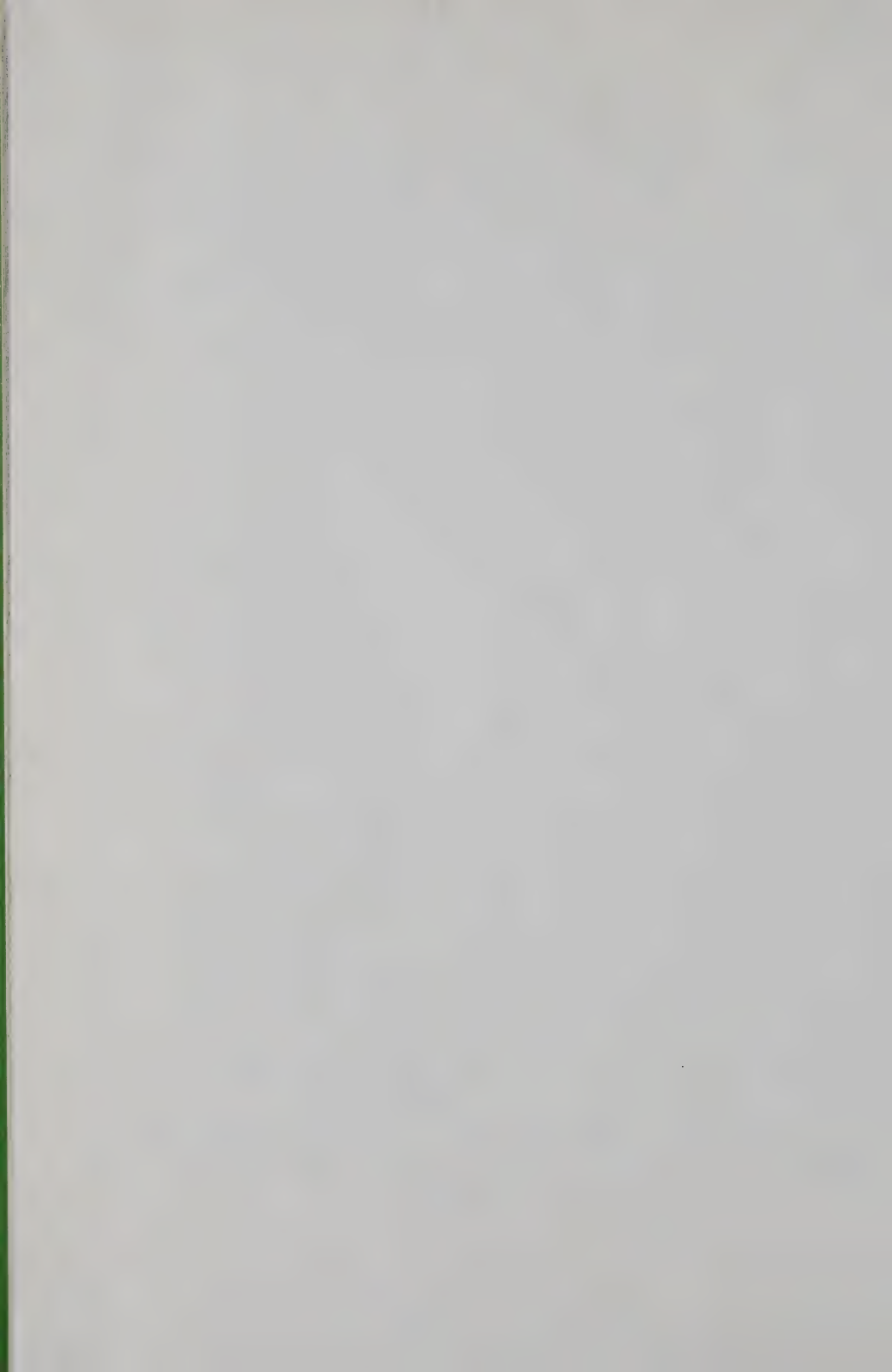
The morning of April 5th the Battalion moved again to Goldlauter,

and fired close support missions for Reconnaissance Troops and Infantry. By nightfall everything had pulled back, but one platoon of Infantry and the Battalion. The next day the Battalion was ordered to return to former positions at Suhl, and was attached to XX Corps and reattached to 416th FA Group, relieved from 183rd Group and XII Corps.

Suhl had been quite a small arms manufacturing center. Several pistol, rifle, and shot-gun factories being found here.

The morning of April 7th the complete Battalion departed from Suhl, and to an assembly area in the vicinity of Untersuhl, traveling all day, part of the time on the Super-Highway (Autobahn). These highways were constructed to expedite military movement within the Reich. They were doing just that now, but not exactly as planned in the New Order. The following day, April 8th, the Battalion made a short move to Markenhäusen, where maintenance was begun on vehicles. On April 9th the Battalion was relieved of attachment to 416th FA Group, and of all things, attached to the 5th Field Artillery Group, the Battalion's old Group from Africa and Sicily. Many old acquaintances were renewed. The 62nd and 65th Armored F.A.'s were no longer in the Group, but the Group Headquarters itself had many of the old personnel.

On April 10th, the Battalion departed again, to Markershausen and



Boilstadt, where an assembly area was reached at noon. The Battalion was given the mission of reinforcing the fires of the 94th FA Bn, in direct support of CCR, 4th Armored Division, whose objective was Dresden. The 58th moved out on April 11th, and traveling over dusty roads, went into firing position late at night south of Erfurt, firing one harrassing mission on Weimar. On the 12th the Battalion moved up with the column and occupied positions east of Weimar at Taubach. The following day they crossed the Saale River, occupied positions at Nennwitz, and moved on again to Rundersdorf in the evening. Moving out on the Autobahn again the next morning, positions were occupied at or near Dönherritz. Some firing was done on the town, and enemy personnel cleared out. The next morning the Battalion departed to Remse.

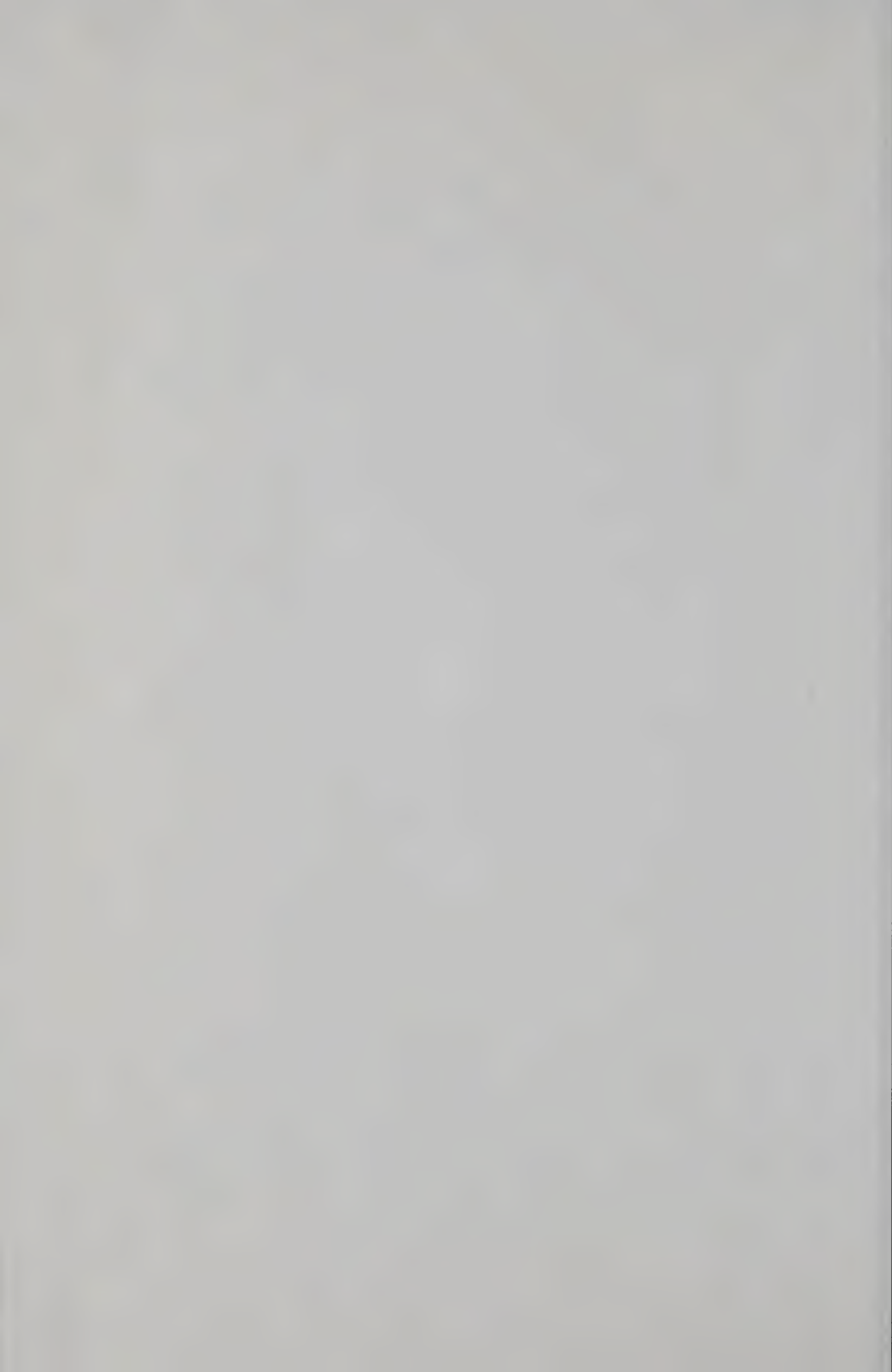
At Remse the Battalion worked on its broken-down vehicles in an effort to ready them for combat. Since the Battalion had been re-equipped in Fontenoille the first part of January, there had been no opportunity to perform more than the most perfunctory maintenance on the vehicles, and things were beginning to fall apart. The Battalion had reached a point where it was just about unable to fight, unless the gun crews carried the M-7's on their backs. The Battalion remained at Remse until the morning of April 19th. Word was received that XX Corps was moving to the southern flank of the Third

Army front, and the 58th, no longer attached to 4th Armored Division, took off for an area north of Bamberg.

The first half of the move was back down the Autobahn. Apparently the move coincided with that of a couple more artillery battalions and an engineer outfit. M7's, Long-Toms, 6×6's, Tanks, went milling down the broad highway four abreast—it was quite a show. Like a mechanized adaptation of the opening of the Cherokee Strip. A column of German PW's in 6×6's got strung out in the parade also, just to add to the general confusion. The Luftwaffe could really have raised hell on that road, but of course at that stage of the game the Luftwaffe wasn't raising much hell anywhere. The column closed into a position at Birkhach, after traveling 156 miles. Two tanks and several M-7's were left strung along the road.

On the afternoon of April 21st the Battalion was relieved of attachment to 5th Group. The mission of the Battalion was now to guard lines of communication, and that portion of the Battalion which was still mobile was dispatched to the city of Bamberg to take up these duties.

Here ended combat duty for the 58th Armored Field Artillery Battalion — in the ETO. From then until the cessation of hostilities — a bare two weeks, the Battalion moved from Bamberg, through Erlangen, Nurnberg, Kaufering, Frontehausen,



and finally to Simbach, just across the river from Braunau, birthplace of Adolph Hitler. The 58th finally ran him down. The Battalion guarded installations, factories, wineries, ammunition dumps, etc.

This more or less brings the history of the 58th Armored Field Artillery Battalion up to date. Looking back through the pages it seems chiefly a record of travel, attachments and assignments—some 15,000 miles of sea and land travel, in 12 foreign countries; attachment or assignment to 4 Armies, 7 Corps, 19 Divisions. During its 31 months over-seas. And 417 Days of COMBAT. The Battalion has been attached and detached oftener than Gypsy Rose Lee's Garter Belt.

It doesn't tell very well about the endless grinding through swirling dust; the everlasting cry of "March Order!" in the middle of the night; the mixed feeling of futility and fear huddled in a slit trench during

counter-battery; the sordid monotony of death by the roadside, of blasted homes and burned, twisted metal. And it doesn't tell of the close, warm relationship of men who have for two and one half years lived, sweated, laughed, feared, and played together in a strange land, and in the uncertain shadow of pain, destruction, and death.

Thus we close, at least temporarily, the story of the Five-Eight and its Officers and Men. A pretty nice bunch of guys. Some of them drank a bit too much, And when the chips were down, some of them died in the lemon groves of Sicily, on the beach of Normandy, in the frozen fields around Bastogne.

General Eisenhower said a few days ago that troops who fought in Africa and the ETO will not fight in the Pacific. This is accepted in the Battalion with polite enthusiasm. Next week the 58th will probably be in direct support of the Philippine Scouts.

FINIS

